This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

**Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

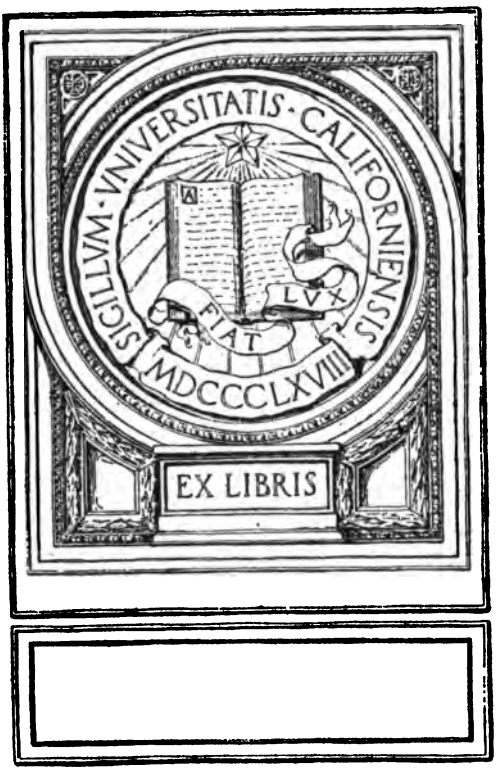
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

**About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

# TO KIEL IN THE "HERCULES"

LIEUT. LEWIS R. FREEMAN


SIGILLVM · VNIVERSITATIS · CALIFORNIENSIS
LVX
FIAT
MDCCCLXVIII
EX LIBRIS

# TO KIEL IN THE "HERCULES"

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

"THE THREE ADMIRALS:" REAR ADMIRAL ROBINSON, U. S. N. (LEFT), VICE ADMIRAL BROWNING, R. N. (CENTER), REAR ADMIRAL GROSSET (FRENCH) (RIGHT)

# TO KIEL IN THE "HERCULES"

BY

LIEUT. LEWIS R. FREEMAN, R. N. V. R.
Official Correspondent with the Grand Fleet, and Member of Staff of Allied Naval Armistice Commission

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR*

NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY
1919

Copyright, 1919
By DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY, Inc.

VAIL-BALLOU COMPANY
BINGHAMTON AND NEW YORK

# CONTENTS


| CHAPTER | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| I | Into German Waters | 1 |
| II | Getting Down to Work | 31 |
| III | First Impressions of "Starving Germany" | 61 |
| IV | Across the Sands to Norderney | 92 |
| V | Nordholz, the Den of the Zeppelins | 122 |
| VI | Merchant Shipping | 154 |
| VII | The Bombing of Tondern | 179 |
| VIII | Through the Canal to the Baltic | 198 |
| IX | To Warnemunde and Rugen | 224 |
| X | Jutland as a German Saw It | 255 |
| XI | Back to Base | 283 |


405748

# ILLUSTRATIONS


PAGE

"The Three Admirals." Rear Admiral Robinson, U. S. N. (left), Vice Admiral Browning, R. N. (center), Rear Admiral Grosset, (French) (right) . . . . *Frontispiece*

Heligoland in sight! . . . . . 18

Members of the Allied Naval Commission, Admiral Browning in center . . . . . 34

The Allied Naval Commission and Staff, taken on board *Hercules* . . . . . 34

The Padre of the *Hercules* talking with newly arrived British prisoners . . . . . 40

In the Elbe, Hamburg . . . . . 166

Railroad station at Hamburg . . . . . 166

Floating dock for lifting submarines in Kiel Harbour . 182

Birdseye view of Kiel . . . . . 192

In Kiel dockyard . . . . . 192

H. M. S. *Viceroy* entering Kiel Canal lock at Brunsbüttel 200

Semaphore station on Kiel Canal, from *Hercules* . . . 206

Kiel dockyard from the Harbour . . . . . 214

Foreshore of Kiel Harbour with the Kaiserlich Yacht Club at left of grove of trees . . . . . 220

*Hindy* (left) and German pilot who claimed to have launched the torpedo which damaged the *Sussex* . . 228

British prisoners and German sailors at Warnemünde . 240

View of Kiel Canal from nearmost turret of the *Hercules* 258

*Hercules*, with three V class destroyers in Kiel Harbour . 266

H. M. S. *Hercules* and H. M. S. *Constance* in Kiel locks . 286

# TO KIEL IN THE "HERCULES"

# TO KIEL IN THE "HERCULES"

## I

### INTO GERMAN WATERS

"THE *Regensburg* has been calling us for some time," said the chief signal officer as he came down for his belated "watch" luncheon in the ward-room, "and it looks as though we might expect to see her come nosing up out of the mist any time after two o'clock. She excuses herself for being late at the rendezvous by saying that the fog has been so thick in the Bight that she had to anchor during the night. It's not any too good a prospect for a look-see at Heligoland, for our course hardly takes us within three miles of it at the nearest."

It was in a fog that the *Hercules* had dropped down through the moored lines of the Grand Fleet the previous morning, it was in a fog that she had felt her way out of the Firth of Forth and by devious mine-swept channels to the North Sea, and it was still in a fog that she—the first surface warship of the Allies to penetrate deeply into them since the Battle of the Bight, not long after the outbreak of the war—was approaching German

waters. Indeed, the whole last act of the great naval drama—from the coming of the *Königsberg* to the Forth, with a delegation to receive the terms of surrender, to the incomparable pageant of the surrender itself—had been played out behind the fitful and uncertain raisings and lowerings of a fog-curtain; and now the epilogue—wherein there was promise that much, if not all, that had remained a mystery throughout the unfolding of the war drama itself should be finally revealed—was being held up through the wilfulness of this same perverse scene-shifter. The light cruiser, *Regensburg,* which, "according to plan," was to have met us at nine that morning at a rendezvous suggested by the German Naval Staff, and pilot the *Hercules* through the mine-fields, had not been sighted by early afternoon. Numerous floating mines, rolling lazily in the bow-wave spreading to port and starboard and ogling us with leering, moon-faced impudence in the fog, had been sighted since daybreak, auguring darkly of the explosive barrier through which we were passing by the "safe course" the Germans (in lieu of the promised charts which had failed to arrive) had advised us by wireless to follow.

Now mines, floating or submerged, are not pleasant things to navigate among. Although, theoretically, it is impossible for any ship to run

into a floating mine even if she tries (the bow-wave tending to throw it off, as many experiments have proved); and although, theoretically, a ship fitted with paravanes cannot bring her hull into contact with a moored mine; yet the fact remained that ships were being lost right along from both kinds. It seemed high time, then, in the case of the *Hercules* and her escorting destroyers, that the German Navy, which had undertaken to see them safely through the mine barrier, and which knew more about the pattern of its death-traps than any one else, should begin to shoulder some of its responsibilities. It was good news that the *Regensburg* was about to make a tardy appearance and hand over a hostage in the form of a German pilot.

. . . . . .

The blank grey fog-curtain which trailed its misty folds across the ward-room scuttles discouraged all of the grate-side loungers whom I tried to bestir to go up at two o'clock to watch for the appearance of the *Regensburg,* and, meeting, with no better success in the snugly comfortable "commission-room" into which the former gun-room had been converted for the voyage, I mounted alone the iron ladders which led to the lofty vantage of the signal bridge. There was only a few hundred yards of visibility, but the

even throb of the engines, the swift run of the foam along the sides, and the sharp sting of the air on my cheek told that there had been little if any abatement of the steady speed of seventeen knots at which *Hercules* had been steaming since she passed May Island the previous day at noon. The *Regensburg,* the chief yeoman of signals told me, had made a W.T. to say that she had been compelled by the fog to slow down again, and this, he figured, might make it between three and four o'clock before we picked her up. "There's no use waiting for the Huns, sir," he said, with a tired smile. "The hanging back habit, which they were four years in cultivating, seems to have grown on them so that they're hanging back even yet. Best go down and wait where it's warm, and I'll send a boy to call you when we know for certain when she'll turn up."

My foot was on the ladder, when the sight of a seagull dancing a giddy *pas seul* on the titillating horn of a mine bobbing off astern recalled a story an Italian destroyer skipper had once told me, of how he had seen an Albanian sea eagle blow itself up as a consequence of executing a precisely similar manœuvre. I lingered to get the chief yeoman's opinion of what I had hitherto considered a highly apocryphal yarn, and when he was called away to take down a signal to pass back to the

destroyers, the loom of what looked to me like a ship taking shape in the fog drew me over to the starboard rail. It dissolved and disappeared as my glass focussed on it, only to raise its amorphous blur again a point or so further abeam. Then I recognized it, and smiled indulgent welcome to an old friend of many watches—the first cousin to the mirage, the looming shape which a man peering hard into thick fog keeps *thinking* he sees at one end or the other of the arc of his angle of vision.

Any man actually on watch knows better than to let his mind take liberties with "fog pictures," and not a few of those who have done so have had the last picture of the series merge into a reality of wind and water and a good ship banging itself to pieces on a line of submerged rocks. But I—as so often in voyages of late—was on the bridge without duties or responsibilities. I was free to let the pictures take what form they would; and it must have been what the chief yeoman had just said about the weariness of waiting for the Huns that turned my mind to what I had heard and seen of the four-year vigil of the Grand Fleet.

There was a picture of Scapa as I had seen it on my earliest visit from the basket of a kite balloon towed from the old *Campania*, the same

*Campania* which now rested on the bottom of the Firth of Forth, and the top-masts of which we had passed a half cable's length to port as the *Hercules* steamed out the day before. There were golden sun-notes weaving in a Maypole dance with rollicking slate-black cloud shadows in that picture; but in the next—where the surface of the Flow was beaten to the whiteness of the snow-clad hills hemming it in—the brooding light was darkly sinister and ominous of import, for that was the winter day when we had word that two destroyers, which the might of the Grand Fleet was powerless to save, were being banged to bits against a cliff a few miles outside the gates. Then there was a picture of an Orkney midsummer midnight—just such a night, the officer of the watch told me, as the one on which he had seen the *Hampshire,* with Kitchener pacing the quarter-deck alone, pass out to her doom two years previously—with a fitful green light flooding the Flow, reflected from the sun circling just below the northern horizon, and every kite balloon in the air at the time being torn from its cable and sent flying towards Scandinavia before the ninety-mile gale which had sprung up from nowhere without warning.

Visions of golf on Flotta, picnics under the cliffs of Hoy, and climbs up the peat-boggy sides

of the Ward Hill of the "Mainland," gave place to those of squadron boxing competitions—savage but cleanly fought bouts in a squared circle under the elevated guns of "Q" turret, with the funnels, superstructures, and improvised grandstands alive with bluejackets—and regattas, pulled off in various and sundry craft between the long lines of anchored battle-ships. A long series (these more like panoramas) of hurried unmoorings and departures—by division, by squadron, and with all the Grand Fleet, through every square mile of the North Sea from the Bight to far up the coast of Norway—finished up at Rosyth, in that strange fortnight just before the end, when all but those on the "inside" thought the persistent "short notice" was due to a desire to keep the men aboard on account of the 'flu, and not to the fact of which the Admiralty appear to have been so well advised, that the German naval authorities—for the first and last time—were making desperate efforts to get their ships out for the long-deferred *Tag*.

Then the fog-bank ahead—or so it seemed—was splashed with the gay colour of "Armistice Night," when all the spare signal lights (to say nothing of a lot that couldn't be spared) of the Grand Fleet streaked the sky with joyous spurts and fountains of fire, when stealthy pirate bands from the K-boats dropped through the ward-room

skylights of the light cruisers and carried off prisoners who had to be ransomed with champagne, when Admirals danced with matelots on the forecastles of the battle-cruisers, and all the pent-up feelings of four years ascended in one great expansive "whouf" of gladness. I recalled with a chuckle how the "General" signal which the Commander-in-Chief had made ordering the historic occasion to be celebrated by "splicing the main brace" according to immemorial custom in the Navy, was preceded by "Negative 6th B.S.," in consideration of the sad fact that the Yankee ships had nothing aboard to "splice" with. That didn't prevent them, though, from bending a white ensign on their flag halliards, hoisting it to the main topmast of the *New York,* and illuminating it with all the search-lights of the squadron. That happy tribute, I recalled, to the flag of the Navy with which the Americans had served with such distinction for a year, had started the sacking of the signal light lockers, and that picture ended as it began, with the dour Scotch heavens lanced with coloured flame spurts which the dark tide of the Firth gave back in crinkly reflections.

The next picture to sharpen into focus on the fog-curtain was that of a long, trim three-funnelled cruiser, with a white flag at her fore and the German naval ensign at her main, heading in to-

ward the mouth of the Firth of Forth under the escort of a squadron of British light cruisers and destroyers. I had witnessed the meeting of the *Königsberg,* which was bringing over Admiral Meurer and other German naval officers to arrange the details of the surrender of the High Sea Fleet, from the foretop of the *Cassandra.* The rendezvous, at which the *Königsberg* had been directed by wireless to meet the Sixth Light Cruiser Squadron ordered to escort her in, chanced to fall in an area under which a German submarine, a fortnight previously, had planted its full load of mines. These, in the regular course of patrol, had been discovered and swept up within a day or two, but since that fact had not been communicated to the Germans, the *Königsberg,* doubtless thinking the English sense of humour had prompted them to prepare for her a bit of a surprise in the way of a lift by a German petard, skulked off to the southward, where she was only rounded up after two hours of rending the ether with wireless calls. There were two things I remembered especially in connection with that historic meeting—one was the mob of civilians (probably would-be delegates from the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council) jostling the officers on the roomy bridge of the *Königsberg,* and the other was the fluent cursing of the gun-

nery lieutenant of the *Cassandra,* who was with me in the foretop, over the unkind fate which had robbed him of the chance of opening up with his six-inch guns on the first Hun warship he had set eyes on since the war began. I thought I had heard in the course of the past year all that the British sailor had to say of the German as a naval foe; but L—— said several new things that afternoon, and said them well.

Poor old *Cassandra!* Although we did not get word of it until a day or two after our arrival in Wilhelmshaven, within a very few hours of the time I was thinking of her there in the fog of the Bight, she had collided with a mine in the Baltic and gone to the bottom.

There was another picture of the *Königsberg* ready to follow on as the first dissolved. This was the brilliantly lighted hull of her—the only undarkened ship of the hundreds in the Firth of Forth that night—as I saw it an hour before daybreak the following morning, when I set off from the *Cassandra* in a motor launch to be present in the *Queen Elizabeth* during the historic conference which was to take place there that day. Admiral Beatty had refused to receive the revolutionary delegates at the preliminary conference which had been held in the British flagship the previous night, and as a consequence it appears that Ad-

miral Meurer and his staff were summoned to make a report to their "superiors" on their return. This strange meeting had been convened shortly after midnight (so the captain of the M.L., which had been patrolling round the *Königsberg* all night, told me), but still, five hours later, as "M.L. 262" slid quietly by at quarter speed, the rumble of guttural Teutonic voices raised in heated argument welled out of the open scuttles of what had probably been the ward-room. It occurred to me even then that this rumble of angry dispute was prophetic of what Germany had ahead in the long night that was closing upon her.

Although "M.L. 262" ended up an hour later with her propellers tangled in the cable of Ox-Guard boom, I managed to get on the flagship in time to see Admiral Meurer and his party come climbing up out of the fog to her quarter-deck. The conference lasted, with short intervals, until long after dark, and the next picture I saw was that of five German naval officers, chagrined and crestfallen, being piped over the side to the barge which was to take them to the destroyer standing by in the fog to return with them to the *Königsberg* at her anchorage, Inchkeith. It was "Officers' Night" for the kinema in the "Q.E.," and they were showing a "made-in-California" film called the "Rise and Fall of Julius Cæsar."

I remember distinctly that Casca had just driven the first thrust, and the mob of conspirators were thronging upon Cæsar round the "base of Pompey's statue," when the commander sent me word that the guests were about to depart.

The captain of the fleet, the captain, the commander, the officer of the watch and the boatswain were waiting at the head of the starboard gangway as I stepped on deck, and out of the fog, which had thickened till I could not see the muzzles of the guns of "Y" turret, the Germans were advancing from aft. The frown on Admiral Meurer's heavy brows was magnified by the cross light of the "yard-arm group" at the gangway, and his mouth, with its thin hard lips, showed as a straight black line. With a click of the heels and the characteristic automaton bow of the German, he saluted the British officers in turn, beginning with the captain of the fleet, stepped down the short gangway and disappeared into the waiting barge to the shrilling of the pipes. Bowing and clicking, the others followed suit, a weedy "sub," with an enormous roll of papers under his arm, going over last.

The *Oak*, herself invisible in the fog, groped blindly with her searchlight to pick up the barge. "We must hold the light steady," facetiously quoted the Press correspondent at my elbow from

a speech of President Wilson's which had appeared in the morning papers, and then added thoughtfully, "It may be a *light* that kind need for guidance, but if I had the leading of them for the next generation it would be by a ring in the nose."

Now, panorama resumed. It was the day of the surrender, and the *Cardiff*, with her high-flown kite balloon in tow, was leading the line of German battle-cruisers out of the eastern mist. I was watching from the bridge of the *Erin*, and an officer beside me, recognizing the *Seydlitz*, flying the rear-admiral's flag, in the lead, with the *Moltke* and *Derfflinger* next in line, told how, from the light cruiser in which he had chased them at Dogger Bank, he had seen at least two of the three, leaving the *Blücher* to her fate, dashing for the shelter of their minefields with flames swirling about their mastheads. Another spoke casually of how, in the *Tiger* at Jutland, he had been for a wild minute or two, while his ship was rounding a "windy corner" as Beatty turned north to meet the British Battle Fleet, under the concentrated fire of all the battle-cruisers—with the exception of the *Hindenburg*, but with the *Lutzow* added—now steaming past us. We remarked the "flattery of imitation" in the resemblance of the *Hindenburg* with her long run of

forecastle and "flare" bows, to the *Repulse* and *Renown,* and of the symmetrical, two-funnelled *Bayern* as she appeared between the *Kaisers* and the *Königs* in the German battleship line to the British *Queen Elizabeth* class laid down before the war. The *Queen Elizabeth* herself, falling out of line to take the salute of the ships of the fleet she had led to victory as they passed, brought that reel of panorama to an end.

The next was of five ships of the *Kaiser* class, as they had appeared from the *Emperor of India,* which, with the rest of the Second Division, was escorting a squadron of the enemy to Scapa for internment. We saw the German ships at closer range now, and the better we saw them the worse they looked. Their fine solidity was less impressive than from a distance, for now our glasses revealed the filth of the decks, the lack of paint, and the slovenly, sullen attitude of the motley garbed figures lounging along the rails. We passed within a biscuit toss of the *Kaiserin* when their leading ship, the *Friedrich der Grosse,* lost her bearings in some way and failed to follow the *Canada* through the anti-submarine boom off the end of Flotta, an action which only the smartest kind of seamanship on the part of the division of *Iron Dukes* prevented from developing into a serious disaster. Most of the Huns—to judge by

the expression on the faces leering across at us—would have welcomed a smash; but it was avoided by a hair, and they ultimately straightened themselves out, straggled through into the Flow, and on to their more or less final resting-place, off the inner entrance to Gutter Sound.

The final picture, as it chanced, which my fancy projected on the curtain of the fog was one that embraced what I saw from the steam pinnace which was taking me to the *Impérieuse,* on my way back to Rosyth. An angry Orkney sunset was flaring over the hills of Hoy—a sullenly red glow, gridironed by thin strata of black cloud like the bars of a grate—and a sinister squall was advancing from the direction of Stromness to the northward. For a few moments the hot light of the sunset had silhouetted the confused hulls of battleships and battle-cruisers against the silvered seas beyond, and revealed the disordered phalanx of the moored destroyers blocking the mouth of Gutter Sound; then it was quenched by the onrush of the storm clouds, and all that was left of the High Seas Fleet disappeared into shadow and driving rain.

It was a far cry, I reflected, from the Kaiser's "Our future lies upon the seas!" and Admiral Rodman's "The German ships are of no use to anybody; the simplest solution of the problem

of their disposition is to take the whole lot to sea and sink them." And yet—

Suddenly, stereoscopically clear, on the blank sheet of the fog left as the High Sea Fleet faded from sight, the head-on silhouette of an unmistakably German light cruiser appeared. For an instant the soaring mast and the broad bridge suggested that my fancy had materialized the *Königsberg* again. Then the rat-a-tat of a signal searchlight recalled me to my senses, and it did not need the chief yeoman of signals' "There she is, sir; sending away a boat to bring us a pilot," to tell me we had finally rendezvoused with the *Regensburg*. I descended to the quarter-deck to see the pilot come over the side.

Very smartly handled was that cutter from the *Regensburg*. I remember that especially because it was almost the only German boat that came alongside during all the visit which did not either ram the gangway, or else miss it more than the length of a boat-hook. They explained this by saying that most of the skilled men had left the navy, and that their boats, as a consequence, were in the hands of comparative novices. At any rate, at least one first-class crew of boat-pullers had remained in the *Regensburg*, and they brought their cutter alongside the gangway as neatly as though the *Hercules* were lying in harbour.

Three men, each carrying a small suit-case, came over the side and saluted the officer of the day and the intelligence officer of the admiral's staff, who awaited them at the head of the gangway. The first was a three-stripe officer of the rank the Germans call Korvettenkapitän, the second a warrant officer, and the third (as we presently were informed) a qualified merchant pilot. The Korvettenkapitän was slender of figure, and had a well-bred, gentlemanly appearance not in the least suggestive of the "Hunnishness" one associated—and with good reason, too, as subsequent experience proved—with the German naval officer. His flushed expression showed plainly that he felt deeply the humiliation of the task assigned him of taking the first enemy warships into a German harbour. His head remained bowed a moment after his final salute; then he took a deep breath, squared his shoulders, and asked to be conducted to the bridge at once in order to take advantage of the improved visibility in pushing on in through the minefields.

If one felt a touch of involuntary sympathy for the senior naval officer, a glance at the sinister figure of the merchant pilot was an efficacious antidote. Thick-set and muscular of build, with slack-hanging ape-like arms and bandy legs, his corded bull neck was crowned with the prognath-

ous-jawed head of a gorilla, and a countenance that might well have been a composite of the saturnine phizzes of Trotsky and Liebknecht. One knew in an instant that here was the super-Bolshevik, and looked for the red band on his sleeve, which could only have been temporarily removed while he appeared among the Engländers to spy upon the naval officer whom the revolutionists would not permit to act alone. The way things stood between the two became evident almost at once, for the officer informed the British interpreter at the first opportunity that he could not be responsible for the pilot, while the latter, when some query from the Korvettenkapitän respecting the position of a certain buoy was repeated to him, contented himself with drawing his fingers significantly across his throat, clucking in apparent imitation of a severed wind-pipe, and continuing the guzzling of the plate of "kedgeree" which had been engaging his undivided attention at the moment of interruption.

After putting a German pilot aboard each of the four destroyers, the *Regensburg's* cutter was hoisted in, and we got under weigh again. The visibility had improved considerably, and presently a darker blur on the misty skyline resolved itself into the familiar profile of Heligoland. At first only the loom of the great cliff was dis-

**HELIGOLAND IN SIGHT!**

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

cernible, but by the time this had been brought abeam a slender strip of low-lying ground with warehouses, cranes, and the masts of ships, was distinctly visible. All hands crowded to the starboard side to have a glimpse of Germany's famous island outpost, but the nearest thing to a demonstration I saw was by two marines, who were doing a bit of a shuffle on the precarious footing of a turret top and singing lustily:

"Oh, won't it be grand out in Hel-i-go-land,
When we've wound up the Watch on the Rhine!"

Whatever illusions they had formed of the "grandness" of Heligoland they were allowed to keep, for the only ones who were given to see at close range the dismal greyness of the island fortress were the members of one of the "air" parties, who made a hurried visit in a destroyer to see that the provisions of the Armistice had been carried out at the seaplane station.

The thickening fog-banks which shut off our view of Heligoland were not long in thinning the guiding *Regensburg* to a dusky phantom nosing uncertainly into the misty smother in the direction of where our charts indicated the Bight should be narrowing to the shallow waters of Jade Bay, in an inner corner of which lay Wilhelmshaven. We had counted on getting there that evening, and

a wireless had already been received saying that a German Naval Commission was standing by to come off for a preliminary conference. After heading in for a couple of hours through seas which I heard an officer coming off watch describe as "composed of about equal parts of water, misplaced buoys and floating mines," all hopes of arriving that night were dashed by a signal from the *Regensburg,* saying that she had been compelled to anchor on account of the fog. Calling her destroyer "chicks" about her to mother them for the night, the *Hercules* let go what was probably the first anchor a British surface ship had dropped into German mud since the outbreak of the war.

The unexpected delay made it necessary for both the *Hercules* and the destroyer to put up their pilots for the night. This was managed in the former by giving the officer the flag captain's sea-cabin, and slinging hammocks for his two assistants outside. Doubtless the opportunity to enjoy a change of food was not unwelcome to any of them. They were served with the regular ward-room dinner. The officer declined the offer of drinks, and said he had his own cigarettes. The other two made a clean sweep of anything that they could get hold of. Even these had cigarettes, but the young signalman who had the temerity to

smoke one which was proffered him in exchange for one of his own, advanced that as an excuse for a mess he made of taking down a searchlight signal from a destroyer two hours later.

"That —— Bolshevik," said the lad the next day, in telling me about the tragedy, "declared the fag he giv' me was made of baccy smuggled into Germany by a friend of his. I tells him that was no kind of reason for him using me to smuggle the smoke out of Germany. And I tells him it tastes to me like rope end, that baccy, and, what's more, that I'd be very happy to return it to him with a rope end. I can't say for certain whether he twigged that little joke or not."

From one of the destroyers, too, there came the next day a story of similar friction in the matter of dispensing hospitality to the guest of the night. The latter, unlike the one who was sent to the *Hercules,* appears to have been a typical Hun. Beginning by introducing himself as a relative of the ex-Kaiser, he ended up by all but going on strike because no sheets could be provided for the bunk in the cabin which—through turning out its owner to "sling" in the ward-room—had been given him for the night. That alone had been a considerable concession under the circumstances, for, through the presence of two extra flying officers, two "subs" had given up their cabins, and

were sleeping in the ward-room already. It must have been a really amusing show that young sprig of Junkerism put up. He mentioned the matter of linen several times, finally rising to the crescendo of "I must have the sheets by nine o'clock, and it now lacks but five minutes of that time." I was never able to verify the story that the steward really gave him the sheets of notepaper that one of the Yankee officers volunteered to contribute. How mad the young exquisite was about the whole affair may be judged from the fact that he left behind him in the morning his own personal and private cake—only slightly used—of toilet soap. Whether this was pure swank—high princely disdain of an object of value—or whether he was blind with passion and overlooked it, they could never quite make up their minds in the *V*——.

The fog lapped and curled dankly round the *Hercules* that night, wrapping the ship in a clammy shroud of cold moisture that dripped eerily from the rigging and sent a chill to the marrow of the bones of the men and officers on watch. But below there was warmth and comfort. The ward-room celebrated the occasion with a "rag" to the music of its own Jazz band, while in the admiral's cabin the kinema man, who had been brought along to film the historic features of the voyage, entertained with a movie of a South Amer-

ican revolution, a picture full of the play of hot passion and fierce jealousy, enacted in and around an ancient castle which none but a Californian could have recognized as a building of the recent San Diego Exposition. "The Admiral's Movies," "With a Complete Change of Program Nightly," became one of the star turns of the voyage from that time on.

Cut off though we were by the fog from sighting anything farther away than the riding lights of the nearest destroyer, strange voices of the new world we had moved into since morning kept reaching the *Hercules* on the wings of the wireless. Now it was the *Regensburg* calling to say, "I am lying off Outer Jade Lightship and illuminating it with my searchlight." Not much help, that, on a night when a searchlight itself was quenched to a will-o'-the-wisp at a cable's length. Then there was a message from the main fount of some "Workmen's and Soldiers' Council" requesting that the Allied Naval Commission should receive a delegation of its members at Wilhelmshaven. It was not a long message, but the reply flashed back to it was, I understand, a good deal shorter. There was chatter between ship and ship, and even the call—from somewhere in the Baltic, I believe—of a steamer in distress. The name of the *Moewe,* in an otherwise unintelligible

message, caused hardly the flutter it would have had we picked it up in the same waters a month earlier.

There was little news to us in a message from some land station telling all and sundry that the "high-sea-ship" *Regensburg* was *"zu Anker bei aussen Jade Feuerschiff,"* that the *Hercules* and destroyers were *"zu Anker bei Weser Feuerschiff,"* and that there was *"noch Nebel."* The *Regensburg* had already told us where she was and our own position we knew: also the fact that "fog continues."

A groan from Germany in travail reached us in a message from the "Soldatenrat" of the "Fortress of Borkum" to the Council in Berlin. They disapproved most heartily of the attitude of the meeting of the *"Gross Berliner"* councils for Greater Germany. They greatly regretted the attempt of one part of the people to establish a dictatorship over another, and considered that this showed a lamentable lack of confidence in *"unserem Volke"*—"our people." *"Wir wollen Demokratie und keine Diktatur,"* they concluded; "we want a democracy and no dictator."

Then we heard the German battleship *König* (which, in company with the *Dresden,* a destroyer and two transports, we had sighted that morning tardily *en voyage* to make up the promised quota

at Scapa) calling to the *Revenge*—at that time the flagship of the squadron watching the interned ships—for guidance. "Am near to the point of assembly with the other ships," she said in German, "and bad weather is coming on. Cannot stop with *Dresden* in tow. What course can I take from point of assembly?"

Deep called to deep when the C.-in-C. of the Grand Fleet at Rosyth told the C.-in-C. of the High Sea Fleet what arrangements were being made to send back the surplus crews of the interned ships, and for a while the vibrant ether let fall such familiar names as *Karlsruhe, Emden, Nürnberg, Hindenburg, Kaiser, Von der Tann* and *Friedrich der Grosse,* men from all of which, we learned, were to be started homeward in a transport called the *Pretoria.*

There was hint of "family trouble" in the German Navy in a signal from Admiral Von Reuter at Scapa to the Commander-in-Chief of the High Sea Fleet at Wilhelmshaven. "Request that third group (of transports) may include a flag officer to relieve me," it ran in translation, "as I am returning home with it on account of sickness."

That signal, I think, gave the ward-room more quiet enjoyment than any of the others, for it was the first forerunning flutter of the German wings beginning to beat against the bars of Scapa.

"I've often been a prey to that same complaint during our four years at Scapa," said the commander musingly, in the interval following the passing round of the wireless wail. "Of course Admiral Von Reuter is sick—homesick. Who wasn't? *Who isn't?* But there was no use in sending a signal to any one complaining about it. But isn't it worth just about all we went through in sticking it there for four years to be able to think of the Huns being interned there, and in their own ships? They're not quite so comfy as ours to live in, you know. I wonder what Herr C.-in-C.'s answer will be."

That answer was picked up in good time. "First group of transports have arrived back safely," the Commander-in-Chief of the High Sea Fleet began inconsequentially, adding abruptly, "Admiral Von Reuter is advised to stay where he is, if at all possible." That pleased the ward-room so much that the Junior Officers' Glee Club was sent to the piano to create a "Scapa atmosphere" by singing songs of the strenuous early months of the war. "Coaling, coaling, coaling, always jolly well coaling," to the air of "Holy, Holy, Holy!" reached my ears even in the secluded retreat of the "commission-room," to which I had retired to write up my diary.

But the most amusing message of all was one

which the senior interpreter—one time a distinguished Cambridge professor of modern languages—was dragged out of his bunk at something like three o'clock in the morning to translate. Everything sent out in German was being meshed in our wireless net on the off-chance that information of importance might be picked up, and, for some reason, the message in question impressed the night operator—as it lay before him, fresh caught, upon his pad, as being of especial significance. This was what I deciphered on the sheet of naval signal paper which the senior interpreter, returning all a-shiver to his bunk after making the desired translation in the coding room, threw at my head when I awoke in the next bunk and asked sleepily for the news.

(?) to (?).

"Good morning. Request the time according to you. My watch is fast, I think."

It was probably from the skipper of one trawler to his "opposite number" in another. It was on my lips to ask Lieut. B—— if he expected to be called when the reply was picked up, but the ominous glare in the unpillowed eye he turned in my direction as I started to speak made me change my mind.

The fog was still thick at daybreak of the following morning, but by ten o'clock the visibility had improved sufficiently to appear to make it worth while to get under weigh. Heading easterly at twelve knots, we shortly came to a buoy-marked channel which, according to our directions, promised to lead in to the anchorage off Wilhelmshaven we desired to reach. The *Regensburg,* which had evidently gone in ahead, was not sighted again, but two powerful armed patrol boats came out to keep us company. It was soon possible to see for several miles, the low line of the Frisian coast coming into sight to port and starboard.

Presently we passed, on opposite courses, a German merchant steamer. Luckily, some one on the bridge observed in time that she had a man standing by the flag halyards at her stern, and so we were prepared to return with the white ensign what must have been the first dip a British ship had had from a German since August, 1914. When the second and third steamers encountered also dipped their red, white, and black bunting, followed by similar action on the part of two tugs and a lighthouse tender, it became evident that general orders in that connection had been issued. That was our first hint of the "conciliatory" tactics which it soon became apparent all of that part of Northern Germany with which

there was a chance of any of the Allied Naval Armistice Commission coming in contact had been instructed to follow.

The steeples and factory chimneys of Wilhelmshaven began appearing over the port bow at noon, and a half-hour later *Hercules* had dropped anchor about a mile off a long stone mole which curved out from the dockyard. Almost immediately a launch was seen putting out of the entrance, and presently it came bumping alongside the starboard gangway. Rear-Admiral Goette, a smooth-shaven, heavy set man of about fifty, was the first up to the quarter-deck, where his salute was returned by the captain, commander, the officer of the day, and several officers of Admiral Browning's staff. His puckered brow indicated something of the mental strain he was under, a strain the effects of which became more and more evident every time he came off for a conference.

The thirteen other members of the Commission under Admiral Goette's presidency followed him up the gangway. The first of these, a tall blond officer of fine bearing, was on the list as Kapitan z. S. von Müller, but it was not until after the final conference, over a fortnight later, that we learned for certain that he was the able and resolute commander of the *Emden,* famous in the first year of the war for her destruction of Allied commerce

and the fine fight he had put up before being forced to the beach of North Cocos Island by the faster and heavier armed *Sydney*. If it was a fact, as has been suggested, that the Germans put Von Müller on their Naval Armistice Commission because of the admiration that had been expressed in the British papers of his brave and sporting conduct on the latter occasion, the effect of this fine piece of Teutonic subtlety was completely lost. As I have said, his real identity was not discovered until the last of the conferences was over.

As soon as the last of the German officers had reached the quarter-deck and completed his round of heel-clicking salutes, the party was conducted directly to Admiral Browning's cabin, where the first of a series of conferences calculated deeply to influence Germany's naval future for many years to come was entered into without delay.

## II

### GETTING DOWN TO WORK

An unfailing test of the treatment the Germans would have meted out to the Allies had their respective positions been reversed during the armistice interval, was furnished by the attitude of all the enemy people—from the highest official representatives to the crowds on the streets—with whom Admiral Browning's Naval Commission was thrown in contact. This was especially noticeable in the case of naval officers, and with none of these more so than with the greater part of those constituting the commission, presided over by Rear-Admiral Goette, which met the Allied Commission to arrange the details of carrying out the provisions of the armistice relating to maritime affairs. Fully expecting from the representatives of the victorious Allies the same treatment they had extended to the beaten Russians at Brest-Litovsk, and the beaten Rumanians at Bucharest, they adopted from the outset an attitude of sullen distrust, evidently with the idea that it was the one best calculated to minimize the concessions they would be called upon to make.

When it transpired that the Allied commissioners appeared to have no intention of exercising their victor's prerogative of humiliating the emissaries of a beaten enemy—as no Prussian could ever have refrained from doing in similar circumstances—but that, on the other hand, the former were neither disposed to bargain, "negotiate," nor in any way to abate one whit from their just demands, the attitude of the Germans changed somewhat. They were more reasonable and easy to deal with; yet to the last there was always discernible that feeling of thinly veiled contempt which the beaten bully cannot conceal for a victor who fails to treat him as he himself would have treated any adversary he had downed.

The opening conference between the Allied and German commissions was held in Admiral Browning's dining cabin in the *Hercules,* as were all of those which followed. The German officers, leaving their overcoats and caps in a cabin set aside for them as an ante-room, were conducted to the conference room, where the heads of the Allied Commission were already assembled and in their places. Most of the Germans were in frock coats (of fine material and extremely well cut), with small dirk-like swords at hip, and much-bemedalled. There was none of them, so far as one could see, without one grade or another of the

Iron Cross, worn low on the left breast (or just about over the liver, to locate it more exactly), with its black-and-white ribbon rove through a lapel. Only Captain Von Müller wore the coveted "Pour le Mérite," doubtless for his commerce destruction with the *Emden*. Admiral Goette wore two rows of ribbons, but none of the decorations themselves.

The Allied delegates rose as the Germans entered, remaining standing until the latter had been shown to the places assigned them. At the right of the main table, as seen from the door, was seated Admiral Browning, with Rear-Admiral Grasset, of the French Navy, on his right, and Rear-Admiral Robinson, of the American Navy, on his left. Captain Lowndes, Admiral Browning's Chief of Staff, sat next to Admiral Robinson, in the fourth chair on the Allied side of the table. The Flag Lieutenants of the French and American Admirals, and the two officers representing respectively Japan and Italy, occupied chairs immediately beyond the senior officers of the Commission. At two smaller tables in the rear were several British Flag officers, with secretaries and stenographers. The official British interpreter, Lieut. Bullough, R.N.V.R., sat at the head of the table. The heads of the Allied subcommissions representing the flying services and

shipping did not occupy seats during all of the conference, but were called in during the discussion of matters in which they were interested.

Admiral Goette was seated directly opposite Admiral Browning at the main table, with Commander (or Korvettenkapitän) Hinzman on his right, and Commander Lohman on his left. The former—a shifty-eyed individual, with a pasty complexion and a "mobile" mouth which, in its peculiar expansions and contractions, furnished an accurate index of the state of its owner's mind—was from the General Naval Staff in Berlin, which accounted, doubtless, for the fact that Admiral Goette turned to him for advice in connection with practically every question discussed. Commander Lohman had charge of merchant shipping interests, which were principally in connection with the return of British tonnage interned in German harbours at the outbreak of the war. Captain Von Müller sat at the left-hand corner of the table, and Captain Bauer, Chief of Staff, in the corresponding place on the right. At a smaller table opposite the door the eight remaining German officers were seated. These were mostly engineers, or from the flying or submarine services, and were consulted as questions in their respective lines arose from time to time.

Without wasting time in preliminaries, Ad-

MEMBERS OF THE ALLIED NAVAL COMMISSION, ADMIRAL BROWNING IN CENTER

THE ALLIED NAVAL COMMISSION AND STAFF, TAKEN ON BOARD "HERCULES"

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

miral Browning got down to business at once by intimating that, since the time which he could remain in German waters was limited, it would be desirable that the very considerable number of visits of inspection necessary to satisfy the Commission that the terms of the armistice had been complied with should begin without delay. The Germans had a formidable array of reasons ready to show why all, or nearly all, of these visits would be practically out of the question. The disturbed state of the country, the uncertain situation in Berlin, the lack of discipline among the men remaining in the ships and at the air stations, the shortage of petrol, the possibility of the hostility of the people in some sections—such as Hamburg and Bremen—to Allied visitors—these were a few of the reasons advanced why it would be difficult or dangerous to go to this place or that, and why the best and simplest way would be to be content with the assurance of the German Commission that everything, everywhere, was just as the armistice terms had stipulated. Of course, at Wilhelmshaven, where things were quiet at the moment, and where they still had a certain amount of authority, there should be no great difficulty in going over the remaining warships and visiting the air-station; but as for going to Hamburg, or Bremen, or visiting any of the more distant naval

air stations—that was impossible at the present.

Asked bluntly, if the search of the warships could begin that afternoon, Admiral Goette replied that it was impossible, for the reason he was not yet in a position to guarantee the personal safety of any parties landing even at the dockyard. Moreover, he would not be in position to give such a guarantee until the matter had been discussed with the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council. Of course, if the party cared to take the chance of landing without a guarantee of safety—

That was really just about as far as that first conference got in the way of definite arrangements, or even assurances. Admiral Goette was given very plainly to understand, however, that it was the intention of the Allied Commission to visit and inspect, in accordance with the terms laid down in the armistice, not only all of the remaining German warships, but also all interned British merchantmen, irrespective of where they were, and all naval airship and seaplane stations, on the Baltic as well as the North Sea side. Also, that full and complete guarantee of the safety of every party landed must be given before the first visit was made. Failing this, it would be necessary for the Commission to return to England and report that the assistance promised by Germany in carrying out the armistice terms had not been given.

The deep corrugation in Admiral Goette's brow grew deeper still when he heard this plain warning, and the corners of his hard cynical mouth drew down at the corners as the thin lips were compressed in his effort at self-control. Shuffling uneasily in his chair, he leaned over as though to speak to the sardonic Hinzman on his right, but thought better of it, and straightened up again. Then his deep-set eyes wandered to the large-scale map of the Western Front which occupied most of the wall of the cabin toward which he faced. The row of pins, which had marked the line of the Front at the moment of the armistice, but had now been moved up and over the Rhine in three protuberant bridgeheads, evidently brought home to him the futility of any further circumlocutions for the present. The muscles of the aggressively squared shoulders relaxed, the combative lines of the face melted into furrows of deepest depression, and the pugnacious jaw was drawn in as the iron-grey head was bowed in submission. His throaty "It shall be done as you say, sir," told that the first lesson had sunk home.

An undertaking on the part of the German Commission to secure, and to send off at an as early hour as practicable the following morning, the required "safe conduct," brought the first conference to a close. The kinema man, who endeav-

oured to take a picture of the departure from cover, in order not to offend the sensibilities of his distinguished subjects, spoiled a film as a consequence of his consideration. Observing that the galley scuttle opened out upon the quarter-deck, but not (in his haste) that the pots of beans simmering on the range were filling the air with clouds of steam as thick as fragrant, set up his machine just inside. Engrossed in turning the crank as one Hun after another went through his heel-clicking round of salutes, he failed to notice the translucent mask of moisture condensing on his lens. The natural result was that this particular reel of film, when it came to be developed, had very little to differentiate it from another reel he exposed the following morning on the men "doubling round," the latter having been taken with the cap over the lens.

The situation as it presented itself that evening was far from encouraging. Having no information whatever of our own as to conditions ashore, we had, perforce, to take the word of the Germans that many of the projected visits of inspection could only be undertaken subject to much difficulty and delay, if at all. There was not even positive assurance that a safe conduct would be forthcoming for the landing in Wilhelmshaven, where the headquarters of the German Naval Com-

mand were located at the moment, and where there had been a minimum of disorder. The wireless caught ominous fragments pointing to an imminent *coup d'état* in Berlin, while rioting was already taking place in Hamburg and Bremen, and Kiel was completely under the control of the workmen and soldiers. It certainly looked as though, the armistice agreement notwithstanding, we had struck Northern Germany in the closed season for touring.

A ray of light in the gloom which hung over the ship that night came in the form of two British prisoners of war who managed to induce a German launch they had found at the quay to bring them off to the *Hercules*. Cheery souls they were, after all their two years of starvation and rough treatment in one of the worst prison camps in Germany. When the armistice was signed, they said, they had been released, given a ticket which was made out to carry them in the Fourth or "Military" class on any German railway, and told they were free to go home. This appears to have been done at a good many prison camps, and where these were within a few days' march of the Western Front, or of Holland, it probably saved a good deal of time over waiting for regular transport by the demoralized and congested railway systems. The cruelty of this criminal evasion of re-

sponsibility was most felt in the parts of the country more remote from the Western Front, where many hundreds of miles had to be covered before the prisoners had any chance of getting in touch with friends. In the cases of most of these unfortunate derelicts long delays were inevitable, and, not infrequently, much hardship. There was little interference, apparently, with the exercise of the travel privilege, but the almost total absence of authoritative information concerning the departure of ships from Baltic ports, by which considerable numbers of British were repatriated *viâ* Denmark and Sweden, resulted in an almost interminable series of wanderings.

The case of the two men I have mentioned was typical of the experiences undergone by prisoners from camps in northern or central Germany. Released, as I have described, when the armistice was signed, they had broken away from their fellows, the bulk of whom were starting to drift toward the Western Front, and struck out for the North Sea coast, acting on the theory that navigation would be opened up at once, and that this route, therefore, would offer the easiest and quickest way of getting home. Well off for money and fairly considerately treated on the food score, they found travelling simple enough, but extremely tedious and full of delays. Arriving at Emden, they

THE PADRE OF THE "HERCULES" TALKING WITH NEWLY ARRIVED BRITISH PRISONERS

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

learned that there had been no provision whatever made for dispatching ships with prisoners from there, and that—both on account of the lack of shipping and the danger of navigating the still unswept minefields—there was no prospect of anything of the kind in the near future. Instead of crossing over the neighbouring frontier of Holland, as they might easily have done, they pushed north to Bremen and Hamburg on the chance that there might be ships from one of these formerly busy ports by which they could find their way back to England. Disappointed again, they were about to go on to Kiel, when they read in a newspaper of the arrival of a British battleship at Wilhelmshaven. Rightly conjecturing that they were at last on the "home trail," they effected the best series of connections possible to the once great naval base, where no obstacles were placed in the way of their getting put off to the *Hercules* without delay.

As the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council had been endeavouring to establish touch with the Commission ever since the arrival of the *Hercules* in German waters, and as the way the "authorities" had co-operated in getting these men put off to the ship looked just a bit suspicious, it was only natural that the latter should be put through a very thorough examination calculated to establish

their identity as British prisoners beyond a doubt. This was being proceeded with by the Commander and the Major of Marines in a room of the after superstructure, when a steward came up from the galley to ask what the new arrivals would like to have for supper. There was quite a list to choose from, it appears. They could have roast beef, said the steward, or sausage and "mashed," or steak and kidney pie, or—"Stop right there, mytey," cut in one of the men, raising his hand with the gesture of a crossings policeman halting the flow of the traffic. "No use goin' any further. 'Styke an' kidney' fer mine." Then, turning to the Commander apologetically, "Begging your pardon, sir, but wot was it you was askin' 'bout wot engagement we wus captured in?" "I don't think we need trouble any further about that, my man," replied the Commander with a grin. "That 'styke an' kidney' marks you for British all right, and if you'll vouch for your mate here, we'll take your word that he's on the level too. We'll send you home by the first mail destroyer, and be glad of the chance to do it. That won't be for a couple of days yet, but I dare say you'll be able to make yourself at home in the *Hercules* until then."

As the first of the hundred or more prisoners for whom the *Hercules* ultimately acted as a

"clearing house" in passing home to England, these two men were very welcome on their own account, but especially so for the news they brought of conditions ashore. It was quiet everywhere they had been in Northern Germany, they said. Nobody was starving, and where the people took any notice of them at all, it was—since the armistice—invariably of a friendly character. "W'y, 'pon my word, sir," said one of them, where I found him that night in a warm corner of one of the mess decks, the centre of an admiring circle of matelots, who were crowding in with offerings of everything from mugs of bitter beer to cakes of chocolate; " 'pon my word, all you 'ave to do is to tyke a kyke o' perfumed soap to the beach when you land, an' they'll all come an' eat right out o' yer 'and. W'y, the gurls—"

Although the Allied Naval Armistice Commission could hardly be expected to smooth its way with "kykes o' perfumed soap," yet all these men had to tell, in that it went to prove how greatly the officers of the German Commission had (to use a charitable term) exaggerated the difficulties to be encountered in getting about ashore, was distinctly encouraging. Indeed, it left those of us who talked with them quite prepared to expect the "guarantee of safety," which came off in the morning, with word that arrangements had been

made for parties to land at once for the inspection of warships and the seaplane station. It even forecasted the message received in the course of the afternoon, to the effect that conditions now appeared to be favourable to the arranging of visits to Norderney, Borkhum, Nordholz, and the other seaplane and Zeppelin stations which the Allied Commission had expressed a desire to see. The Hamburg visit was still in the air, pending the receipt of guarantees of safety, but there was no longer any doubt that it would be arranged, and, moreover, as promptly as the Commission saw fit to insist upon.

For the purpose of the search of warships, and the inspection of merchant ships and air stations, the staff of the Allied Commission had been divided into several parties. The senior party, which was to confine its work entirely to warships and land fortifications, had at least one member of each of the Allied nationalities represented in the Commission. The head of it was the Flag Commander of the *Hercules,* and the technical duties in connection with its work devolved principally upon the British and American naval gunnery experts which it always included, and at least one engineer officer.

There were two "air" parties, one for the inspection of seaplane stations, and the other for

that of airship stations. The senior flying officer was Brigadier-General Masterman, R.A.F., who was one of England's pioneers in the development of lighter-than-air machines, his experience dating back to the experiments with the ill-fated *Mayfly*. His interest was in Zeppelins, and he had the leadership of the party formed for the inspection of airship stations. This party included one other British officer and two Americans.

Colonel Clark-Hall was the head of the second "air" party, which had charge of the inspection of seaplane stations. He had flown in a seaplane in the first year of the war at Gallipoli, and more recently had directed flying operations from the *Furious*, with the Grand Fleet. Having sent off the aeroplanes whose bombs had practically wiped out the Zeppelin station at Tondern, near the Danish border, the previous summer, he had an especial interest in seeing at first hand the effects of that raid, though otherwise his interest was centred in seaplane stations. Two American flying officers, and one British, completed the "seaplane station" party.

The Shipping Board, which had in hand the matter of the return to England of the two score and more of British ships in German harbours, was headed by Commodore George P. Bevan, R.N., the Naval Adviser of the Minister of Ship-

ping, who had distinguished himself earlier in the war as commander of the British trawler patrol in the Mediterranean. With him were associated Commander John Leighton, R.N.R., who had achieved notable success in effecting the return to England of the numerous British merchant ships in Baltic ports at the outbreak of the war, and Mr. Percy Turner, a prominent shipbuilder and Secretary to the Minister of Shipping. The actual inspection of the ships in German harbours was to be done by Commander Leighton, with such assistance as was needed from officers of the *Hercules*.

It fell to the lot of the senior of the warship-searching party to make the first landing. As this party, with at least one member from each nationality, was more or less a "microcosm" of the Commission itself, it was decreed that it should make its visits in state, in the full pomp and panoply of—peace. This meant, one supposed, frock coats, cocked hats, and swords, but as all the former had been sent ashore, by order, early in the war, and as none of the Americans had even the latter, it was evident at once that there was no use competing in a dress parade with the Germans, who were operating at their own base, so to speak. The best that could be done was to borrow swords—from any of the ward-

room officers chancing to have theirs along—for the Americans, and let it go at that. The "International" members, whose principal duty, in connection with the searches, was to walk about the upper decks and look dignified, managed to wear their swords from the time they left the *Hercules* to their return; the others, who had really to look for things, and, therefore, to clamber up and down steel ladders of boiler rooms and the "trunks" of turrets, after numerous annoying trippings up, had finally to "stack arms" in order to get on with their search.

Although none of the officers of the Commission had taken part in the search of the German ships interned at Scapa, they had heard enough of their filthiness and lack of discipline to be prepared to encounter the same things when the inspection of the ships still remaining in home waters was undertaken. In spite of this, the conditions—the dirtiness, the slothfulness, the apparent utter disregard of the men for such few of their officers as still remained—were everywhere much worse than had been anticipated. This may well be accounted for by the fact that the surrendered ships were manned entirely by volunteers, and these, naturally, being the men less revolutionary in spirit and more amenable to discipline, had taken better care of themselves and their quarters than

those who remained behind. At any rate, every one of the ships remaining to the German Navy was an offence to the eye, and most of them to the nose as well. If it was true, as had been said, that sloth and filth are the high hand-maidens of Bolshevism, there is little doubt that these twin trollops were in a position to hand the dregs of the ex-Kaiser's fleet over to their mistress any day she wanted it.

We had, as yet, no definite hint of what attitude the men of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council were going to take toward parties landed to carry out the work of the Allied Commission, and that was one of the things which it was expected this first search of the warships in the Wilhelmshaven dockyard would reveal. The beginning was not auspicious, for in the very first ship visited the whole of the remaining crew were found loitering indolently about the decks, in direct contravention of the clause in the armistice which provided that all men should be sent ashore during the visits of Allied searching parties. The captain, on being appealed to, shrugged his shoulders and said that he was quite helpless. "I ordered them to leave half an hour ago," he explained to the interpreter, "and here they are still. I have no authority over them, as you see; so what is there to do? I am sorry, but you see the position I am in.

I trust you will understand how humiliating a one it is for an officer of the Imperial"—he checked himself at the word *Kaiserliche,* and added merely, "German Navy."

"And, believe me, it *was* humiliating," said one of the American officers in telling of the incident later. "I had to keep reminding myself that the man was a brother officer of the swine that sank the *Lusitania,* and so many hospital ships, to stop myself from telling him how gol darned sorry I was for any one that had got let in for a mess like that."

The situation was scarcely less embarrassing for the officer at the head of the Allied party than for the Germans. Fortunately the Flag Commander was fully equal to the emergency. "If these men are not out on the dock in ten minutes," he said to the captain, "I shall have no alternative but to return at once to the *Hercules* and report that the facilities for search stipulated in the armistice have not been granted me." Glancing at his wrist-watch, he sauntered over to the other side of the deck.

The effect of the words (which appeared to have been understood by some of the men standing near even in English) was galvanic. Blue-jackets were streaming down the gangways before the orders had been passed on to them by their officers, and

the ship, save for a few cooks in the galley, was emptied well within the time-limit assigned. It had evidently been an attempt upon the part of the men to show contempt for their officers, and was not intended to interfere with the work of the searching party. Although we observed countless instances of indiscipline in one form or another, on no subsequent occasion did it appear in a way calculated to annoy or delay one of the Allied parties. On the contrary, indeed, the men—and especially the representatives of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council—were almost invariably more than willing to do anything to help. This spirit, it is needless to say, made progress much faster and easier, and a continuance of it boded hopefully for the completion of the Commission's program within the limit of the original period of armistice.

It seems to have been the strong—and, I have no doubt, entirely sincere—desire of both the German naval officers and the members of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council to get the inspection over and the Allied Commission out of the way that led to a co-operation between the two which I can hardly conceive as existing in connection with their other relations. The representatives of the Workmen and Soldiers appeared quite reconciled to the ruling of the Commission that the

latter was to have no direct dealings with them, and they exhibited no evidences of ill-feeling over the failure of their attempts to establish such relations. The Naval authorities and the Council had evidently come to an agreement by which the latter were to be allowed to have a representative—"watching" but not "talking"—with every Allied party landing, in return for which privilege the Council undertook to prevent any interference from the men remaining in ships or air stations visited. Later, when journeys by railway were undertaken, and a guarantee of freedom from molestation by the civilian population was required, a second Workmen's and Soldiers' representative—a sort of a "plain clothes" detective—was added. Both white-banded men were there to help, not to interfere. Indeed, the men seemed fully to realize the need of a higher mentality than their own in the conduct of the more or less complicated negotiations with the Allied representatives, and were therefore content to support their officers in an attempt to make the best of what was a sorry situation for both.

A slight hitch which occurred in the arrangements of the "seaplane station" party one morning, when the officer who was to have accompanied it failed to turn up on the landing at the appointed hour, showed how slender was the thread by which

the authority of the once proud and domineering German naval officer hung. After cooling their heels in the slush of the dockyard for half an hour, the party returned to the *Hercules* to await an explanation. This came an hour later, when the officer in question, very red in the face, came bumping up to the gangway in a madly driven motor-boat, and clambered up to the quarter-deck to make his apologies.

"I am very sorry," he ejaculated volubly, "but it was not understood by the *Arbeiten und Soldatenrat* that it was I who was to go with you today. In consequence, the permit to wear my sword and epaulettes and other markings of an officer was not sent to me, and so I could not be allowed to travel by the tramway until I had made known the trouble by telephone and had the permit sent. It was even very difficult for me to be allowed to speak over the telephone. You must see how very hard life is for us officers as things are now."

It appears that even the officers going about with the Allied naval sub-commissions were only allowed to wear their designating marks for the occasion, and that, unless a special permit from the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council was shown, these had to be removed as soon as they went ashore. The constant "self-pity" which the offi-

cers kept showing in the matter of their humiliating predicament was the one thing needed to extinguish the sparks of sympathy which would keep flaring up in one's breast unless one stopped to think how thoroughly deserved—how poetically just—it all was.

With one or two exceptions, all the best of Germany's capital ships were known to have been surrendered, and this applied to light cruisers and destroyers as well. The U-boat situation was somewhat obscure, but it was supposed—incorrectly, as transpired later—that a fairly clean sweep of the best of the under-water craft had also been made. The most interesting ships which the Allied Commission expected to see in German waters were the battleship *Baden,* sister of the surrendered *Bayern,* and the battle-cruiser *Mackensen,* sister of the surrendered *Hindenburg.* The *Regensburg* and *Königsberg,* which had been left to the Germans to "get about in," were also considered worthy of study at close range as examples of the latest type of German light cruiser. The *Mackensen,* still far from completed, was in a yard on the Elbe at Hamburg. The others were inspected at Wilhelmshaven.

I think I am speaking conservatively when I say that all of the Allied officers who saw them from the inside were distinctly disappointed in

even these most modern examples of German naval construction. After the extremely good fight that practically every one of them—from the *Emden* and *Königsberg* and the ships of Von Spee's squadron at the Falklands to the battle-cruisers of Von Hipper at Jutland—had put up when it was once drawn into action, it was only natural to expect that some radical departures in construction, armament, and gunnery control would be revealed on closer acquaintance. This did not prove to be the case, though it is only fair to say that, in the matter of gunnery control, there was little opportunity to pass judgment, owing to the fact that, in every instance, the Germans—as they had a perfect right to do—had removed all the instruments and gear calculated to give any indication of the character of the installation.

The German ships were found to be extremely well built, especially in the solidity of construction of their hulls, the fact that they were not intended to be lived in by a full ship's company all of the time making it easy to multiply bulkheads and dispense with doors. But there was nothing new in this fact to those who knew the amount of hammering the *Seydlitz* and *Derfflinger* had survived at Dogger Bank and Jutland. Even so, however, there was nothing to indicate that these latest of German ships would stand more punishment than

any unit of the Grand Fleet after the stiffening all British capital ships received as a consequence of what was learned at Jutland.

In several respects it was evident that the Germans had merely become tardy converts to British practice. The tripod mast, which dates back something like a decade in British capital ships, and which has, since the war, been built in light cruisers and even destroyer leaders, was only adopted by the Germans with the laying down of the *Bayern* and *Hindenburg*. Similarly, the armament—both main and secondary—of the respective classes of battleship and battle-cruiser to which these two ships give the name, is a frank admission on the part of the Germans that the British were five years ahead of them in the matter of guns.

Gunnery control, the one thing above all others which the British Navy was interested in when it came to an intimate study of the German ships, is, unfortunately, one of the things upon which the least light has been shed. The German, since he had to disarm, did the job with characteristic Teutonic thoroughness. The transmitting stations in all of the modern ships—the one point where there would have been a great concentration of special instruments of control—looked like unfurnished rooms in their emptiness. So, too, the foretops

and what must have been the director towers. One moot point may, however, be regarded as settled. There have been many who maintained that, since the German fire was almost invariably extremely accurate in the opening stages of an action, and tended to fall off rapidly after the ship came under fire herself, the enemy gunnery control involved the use of a very elaborate and highly complicated installation of special instruments, many of which were too delicate to stand the stress of continued action. The British and American officers who went over the latest of the enemy's ships, however, are agreed that all the evidence available points to this not being the case—that the German gunnery control, on the contrary, was undoubtedly as simple as it was efficient, and that the fact that it had not stood up well in action was probably more due to human than mechanical failure.

It is considered as by no means improbable that the good shooting of the German ships was largely traceable to the excellence of their range-finders and the special training of those who used them. Whether it is true or not that France and England have succeeded since the war in making optical glass equal to that of Jena, there is no doubt that the latter was superior in the first years of the war. The German ships unquestionably had

more accurate range-finders than did the British, and it is also known now that the Germans took great care in testing the eyesight of the men employed to handle these instruments, and that much attention was given to their training. It is believed that upon these simple points alone, rather than upon the use of a highly complicated system of control, the admitted excellence of German gunnery was based. There is no reason to believe that they had anything better than the British for laying down the "rate of change," and keeping the enemy under fire once he had been straddled.

Although it was known to the British sailor in a general sort of way that the Germans only spent a comparatively small part of their time aboard their ships, the tangible evidence of this remarkable state of affairs—in the vast blocks of barracks at Wilhelmshaven and the very crude, inadequate living quarters in even the most modern of the ships searched—gave him only less of a shock, and aroused in him only less contempt, than did the filth and indiscipline of the German sailors. The German officer who assured one of the searching parties that their ships were made "to fight in, not to live in," told the literal truth, and it only accentuates the bitter irony of the fact that, when finally they refused to fight, they had to begin to be lived in willy-nilly.

"You can't tell me there isn't a God in Israel, now that we've got the Huns at Scapa living in their own ships," said an officer on coming off to the *Hercules* one night after his first day spent in going over some of the remnants of the German Navy at Wilhelmshaven. That same thought is awakening no end of comfort in the breast of many a British naval officer this winter, who would otherwise have been down on his luck for having still to stand to his guns after the war was over. In a previous chapter I have told how we intercepted a wireless from Admiral Von Reuter, saying that he had "gone sick" at Scapa and asking to be relieved. That was not the last by any means that we were to hear of the "hardships" of life in those German "fighting ships" at good old Scapa. The veritable howls of protest rising from the Orkneys were echoing in Wilhelmshaven and Kiel during all the time the Commission spent in German waters. Some mention of the "sad plight" of the German sailors there was made at every conference, and it was at the final one, I believe, that Admiral Goette said that the "cruel conditions" under which the men in the interned ships were being compelled to live at Scapa Flow was alone responsible for the fact that it had been so far impossible to find a crew to man the *Baden,* which he had agreed some days previously

should be delivered in place of the uncompleted *Mackensen.*

Except for the several modern ships I have mentioned, the search of the naval units remaining in German ports resolved itself into a more or less monotonous clambering over a lot of obsolete hulks—from many of which even the guns had been removed—to see that no munitions remained in their magazines. There was always the same inevitable filth to be waded through, always the same gloweringly sullen—or, worse still by way of variation, cringingly obsequious—officers to be endured. The sullen ones usually improved when they found that no "indignities" were to be heaped upon them, and that they had only to answer a few questions and show the way round; but you had to keep a weather eye lifting for the obsequious ones to prevent their helping you up ladders by steadying your elbow, rubbing imaginary spots of grease off your monkey jacket, and —the invariable finale—offering you a limp, moist hand to shake at parting. The latter, like the ruthless U-boat warfare, was dangerous principally on account of its unexpectedness. When adequate "counter measures" were devised against it, it became less threatening, but had always to be looked out for. I don't recall, though, hearing any one confess to having been

"surprised" into shaking hands after the first day or two.

The search of the warships at Wilhelmshaven was finished in a couple of days, while the few old cruisers and destroyers at Emden were inspected in the three hours between going and returning railway journeys, taking about the same length of time. At Hamburg and Bremen there were principally merchant ships and U-boats, and the search of—and for—both of these is a story of its own. The remainder of the work on the North Sea side consisted in journeys—by train, motor, destroyer, or launch—to, and the inspection of, Germany's principal seaplane and airship stations, and of these highly interesting visits I shall write in later chapters.

## III

### FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF "STARVING GERMANY"

Our visit to the island of Norderney was a memorable one for two reasons—first, because we inspected there what is not only the largest of Germany's seaplane stations, but also probably the largest and best equipped in all Europe; and second, because the journey there gave us, all in the course of a few hours, our first after-the-war glimpse of a German city, German countryside, a German railway, and what had once been a German summer resort. The couple of days spent in the search of the German warships had given no opportunity whatever to see anything more than an interminable succession of dirty mess decks, empty magazines, disgruntled officers, slovenly sailors, and cluttered docks. Steeples and factory chimneys and the loom of lofty barracks located Wilhelmshaven without revealing it. The steady dribble of pedestrians along the waterfront road might have been made up of Esquimaux or Kanakas, for all that we could see. One wondered if their emaciated frames were dressed in paper suits, and if their tottering feet clumped along in wooden clogs. The excellence of the ma-

terial of the untidy garb of the sailors, and the well-fed appearance of the latter, seemed to point to the contrary. But still one couldn't be sure. We knew that Germany had never made the mistake of under-feeding or under-clothing her soldiers and sailors, and that where any one had to go without it was always the civilians who suffered. We wanted to see how those civilians had stood the "starvation blockade" against which they had protested so loudly, and now—through our visits to the various naval air stations—the veil was about to be lifted.

The fog—the interminable fog which never lifted for more than a few hours at a time during the whole of our three weeks in German waters—banked thick above the green stream of the swift-running tide as our picket boat shoved off from the *Hercules* at eight o'clock that morning, and there was just sufficient visibility to pick up the successive buoys marking the course to the entrance to the basin. Running in just ahead of an antique torpedo-boat with the usual indolent sailors slouching along its narrow decks, we stepped out upon the longest pontoon landing I have ever seen. Twenty yards wide, and over a hundred in length, it was constructed so as to rise and fall with flow and ebb of what must have been a very considerable tide.

No one being on the landing to receive the party, we started walking in toward its shoreward end. The men on the torpedo-boats stared at us with insolent curiosity, without the suggestion of the shuffle of a foot toward standing at attention as even the "brassiest" of our several "brass-hats" passed by; but from the galley of a tug moored on the opposite side the cook grinned wide-mouthed welcome. She was a fine, upstanding, double-braided blonde of generous proportions, and the bulging bulk of her overflowed the narrow companion-way into which she was wedged as the raw red flesh of her arm swelled over the line of its rolled-up sleeve.

"No traces of under-feeding in that figure," said a British flying officer, with the critically impersonal glance he would have given to the wings of a machine he was about to take the air in. "No," acquiesced one of the Americans; "and there's no fear of *schrecklichkeit* in that face, either. Pipe that 'welcome-to-our-fair-city' grin, won't you. Could you beat it for a display of ivories?"

And so we came to "starving Germany."

A bustling young flying lieutenant came hurrying to meet us at the shore end of the landing, apologizing for his tardiness by saying that it was due to "trouble about the cars." After seeing the

motley collection of motors which awaited us outside the gate, one had no difficulty in believing him; indeed, it was hard to see how there could be anything but "trouble about the cars." The best of them was an ancient Mercedes, the pneumatic tyres of which, worn down to the treads, looked as though they would puncture on the smooth face of a paving stone. Two others—one of them looked like a sort of "perpetuation" of a collision between a Daimler lorry and a Benz runabout, and the other was an out-and-out mongrel with no visible marks of ancestry—had the remains of what had once been solid tyres of *ersatz* rubber bound to the rims with bits of tarred rope. The fourth and last was *ersatz* throughout. That is to say, it seemed to be made—from its paper upholstery to its steel-spring tyres—of "other things" than those from which the normal cars one has always known are made of.

I had heard much of those spring tyres, so, taking advantage of the general rush for the pneumatically tyred Mercedes and the "rheumatically" tyred nondescripts, I lifted an oiled-paper curtain and plumped down on the woven paper cushion of old "*Ersatz.*" As the other cars were quite filled up with the remainder of our party, the escorting German officer came in with me.

"The imitation rubber," he began slowly and

precisely, "makes many good things, but not the good motor tyres. It is resilient, but not elastic. It will stand the pushing but not the pulling. It is not strong, not tough, like the rubber from the tree. Ah, the English were very lucky always to have the real rubber. If that had been so with Germany—"

Just to what extent a continuous supply of real rubber would have modified the situation for Germany I did not learn, for we started up just then, and the rest of the sentence was lost in the mighty whirl of sound in which we were engulfed. The best comparison I can make of the noise that car made—as heard from within—is to a sustained crescendo of a super-Jazz band, the cymbals of which were represented by the clankity-clank of the component parts of the steel tyres banging against each other and the pavement, and the drums of which were the rhythmic thud-thud of the *ersatz* body on the lifeless springs. Although the other cars were rattling heavily on their own account, the ear-rending racket of the steel-tyres dominated the situation completely, and at the first turn I caught an impressionistic blend of blue and khaki uniforms as their occupants leaned out to see what was in pursuit of them.

"It was unlike any sound I ever heard before," said one of them in describing it later. "It was

positively Bolshevik!" All in all, I think "Bolshevik" is more fittingly descriptive than "Jazz-band-ic." It carries a suggestion of "savageness" quite lacking in the latter, and "savage" that raucous tornado of sound surely was. I could never allow myself to contemplate the primal chaos one of the American officers tried to conjure up by asking what it would be like to hear two motor convoys of steel-tyred trucks passing each other during a bombardment. The only sensible comment I heard on that question was from the officer who cut in with, "Please tell me how you'd know there *was* a bombardment?"

There was one thing that steel-tyred car did well, though, and that was to respond to its emergency brake. The occasion for the use of the latter arose when a turning bridge was suddenly opened fifteen or twenty yards ahead of the leading car, imposing upon the latter the necessity of stopping dead inside that distance or taking a header into a canal. The Mercedes, skating airily along on its wobbly tyres, managed it by inches after streaking the pavement with two broad belts of the last "real tree rubber" left in Germany. The leading nondescript—the Benz-Daimler blend—gave the Mercedes a sharp bump before losing the last of its momentum, and all but the last of its fluttering "rope-*ersatz*-rubber" tyres, while

its mate only came to a standstill after skidding sideways on its rims. But my steel-tyred chariot, the instant its emergency brake was thrown on, simply set its teeth into the red brick pavement, and, spitting sparks like a dragon, stopped as dead as though it had run against a stone wall. My companion and I, having nothing to set *our* teeth into, simply kept going right on. I, luckily, only butted the chauffeur, who—evidently because the same thing had happened to him before—took it all in good part; but the dapper young officer, who planted the back of his head squarely between the shoulder blades of the august Workmen's and Soldiers' representative riding beside the driver, got a good swearing at for not aiming lower and allowing the back of the seat to absorb his inertia. Quite apart from the sparks kicked up by the tyres, and the stars shaken down by my jolt, it was a highly illuminating little incident.

We ran more slowly after we crossed the bridge —which also meant more quietly, or rather, less noisily—and for the first time I noticed what a new world we seemed to have come into since we left the immediate vicinity of the docks. It was not so much that we were now passing down a street of small shops, where before we had been among warehouses and factories, as the difference in appearance and spirit of the people. No one—

not even the labourer going to his morning work—had anything of the slovenly hang-dog air of the sailors we had seen in the ships and about the dockyard. The streets and the shops were clean, and even the meanest of the people neatly and comfortably dressed. We had come out of the atmosphere of revolution into that of ordinary work-a-day Germany.

As we rounded a corner and came clattering into the main street of the city, the change was even more marked. At first blush there was hardly a suggestion of war, or of war's aftermath. The big shop-windows were full of goods, with here and there the forerunning red-and-green decorations of the coming holidays. Here was an art shop's display of etchings and coloured prints, there a haberdasher's stock of scarves and shirts and gloves. Even a passing glance, it is true, revealed a prominently displayed line of false shirt fronts; but, then, your German always was partial to "dickeys." A florist's window, in which a fountain plashed above a basin of water-lilies, was golden with splendid chrysanthemums, and in the milliner's window hard by a saffron-plumed confection of ultra-marine held high revel with a riotous thing of royal purple plush.

Noting my eager interest in the gay window panorama, my companion, leaning close to my

ear to make himself heard above the clatter of the tyres, shouted jerkily with the jolt of the car, "We are fond of the bright colours, we Germans, and we make the very good dyes. I think you have missed very much the German dyes since the war, and will now be very glad of the chance to have them again. We have learned much during the war, and they are now better than ever before. We laugh very much when we capture the French soldier with the faded blue uniform, for then we know that the French cannot make the dye that will hold its colour. But the German—"

"Waiting with the goods," I said to myself as I drew away from the dissertation to watch a tramcar disgorging its load at a crossing.

We were now running through the heart of Wilhelmshaven, and it was the early office crowd that was thronging the streets. How well they were dressed, and how well fed they looked! There were no hollow eyes or emaciated forms in that crowd. One who has seen famines in China and India knows the hunger look, the hunger pallor, the hunger apathy. There is no mistaking them. But we had not seen any of them in the German ships or dockyards, we did not see them that day in Wilhelmshaven, and we were not destined to see them in Bremen, Hamburg, Kiel, or anywhere else we went in the course of our many

hundreds of miles of travel in Northern Germany. So far as Mecklenburg, Oldenburg, and Schleswig-Holstein were concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that the starvation whine, which arose from the moment the ink was dry upon the armistice agreement and which still persists, was sheer—to be charitable, let us say—panic.

Presently, as we began to pass some huge masses of buildings which, four or five stories in height, appeared to run on through two or three blocks of the not unattractive park-like grounds with which they were surrounded, my companion, indicating them with a proud wave of his hand, started speaking again. I could not hear him distinctly—for we were speeding up faster now, and consequently making more noise—but I thought I caught the drift of what he was trying to say.

"Ja, ja," I roared back. "Ich verstehe sehr gut. Der naval barracks. Der German High Sea Fleet Base." I think that was hardly the way he was trying to put it, but his vigorous nod of assent showed that I had at least gathered the sense of his observations. As we slowed down at the next corner he put me completely right by saying, "Not for the ships themselves, the big barracks, but for the men when the ships were here. I think you make a joke." I admitted the shrewd impeach-

ment with a grin, but hardly thought it necessary to add that I was afraid he had still missed the best part of the joke. He was a diverting lad, that young flying officer, and he told me many interesting things in the course of the day. Some of them were true, as subsequent events or observations proved; but one of them at least was a calculated and deliberate lie, told with the purpose of inducing one of the "air" parties to give up the plan it had formed of visiting a certain station. I will set down that significant little incident in its proper place.

Although, as we learned later, the fact that a party from the Allied Commission was to land and pass through the city that day had been carefully withheld from the people, the latter exhibited very little surprise at the appearance of officers in uniforms which they seemed to recognize at once as foreign. They had been instructed that they were to make no demonstration of any kind when Allied officers were encountered in the streets, and, docile as ever, they carried out the order to the letter. A mild, unresentful curiosity would perhaps best describe the attitude of all the people who saw us that day, both in Wilhelmshaven and at the country stations.

The fact that many of the streets were dressed with flags and greenery, and that all of the chil-

dren, both boys and girls, trudging along to school carried the red, white, and black emblem in their hands, suggested to me at first that it was part of a patriotic display, a sort of flaunting the new-found freedom in the face of the "invader." But my companion assured me that the decorations were in honour of the expected arrival home of two regiments of Wilhelmshaven Marines from the Front. "We have been *en fête* for a week now in hourly expectation of their coming, and every day the children have put on their best clothes and carried flags in their hands. But the railway service is very bad, and always are they disappointed. You will see the arch of welcome at the railway station. Wilhelmshaven is very proud of its Marine soldiers."

The "arch" at the station turned out to be the evergreen and bunting-decorated entrance to a long shed set with tables, at which refreshments were to be served to the returning warriors. It was surmounted with a shield bearing the words "Willkommen Soldaten," and an eight-line stanza of verse which I did not have time to copy. The gist of it was that the soldiers were welcomed home to "Work and Liberty." It was thoroughly bad verse, said one of our interpreters, but the sentiments were—for Germany—"restrained and dignified." There was nothing about the "un-

beaten soldiers," of whom we had been reading as welcomed home in Berlin and other parts of Germany.

There was a small crowd at the station entrance as our cars drove up, but it parted quietly and made way for us to pass inside. One or two sailors stood at attention and saluted—though whether German or Allied officers it was impossible to tell—and several civilians bowed solemnly and took off their hats. One of these reached out and made temporary captive an irreverent street gamin who—purely in a spirit of fun, apparently—started "goose-stepping" along in our wake. A bevy of minxes of the shop-girl type giggled sputteringly, getting much apparent amusement the while out of pretending to keep each other quiet. One gaudily garbed pair, standing easily at gaze in the middle of the waiting-room, stared brazenly and ogled frank invitation. An austere dame—she might have been an opulent naval captain's frau—drew a languid hand from what looked like a real ermine muff to lift a tortoise-shell lorgnette and pass us one by one in critical review. Then the old ticket-puncher, touching his cap as though he had recognized the party as the Board of Directors on a surreptitious tour of inspection, passed us through the gate and on the platform and our waiting train.

Our special consisted of a luggage van and a passenger coach, drawn by an engine in a very advanced state of what appeared to be neglect. Though all its parts were there, these, except where rubbed clean by friction, were thick with rust and scaled with flaking paint. The worst trouble, however, seemed to come from lack of lubrication, for in the places where every other locomotive I had seen before was dripping with oil, this one showed only caked graphite and hard, dry steel. While there is little doubt that the Germans made a point of turning out their worst engines and motor cars for the use of the Allied sub-commissions in order to give an impression that things were really in a desperate way with them, it is still beyond question that their railway stock deteriorated greatly during the war, and that a shortage of lubricating oils was one of their very worst difficulties.

The passenger coach was equally divided between first- and second-class compartments. Entering at the second-class end, our party distributed itself between the first two compartments reached. By the time one of the several German officers who had now joined us pointed out the big figure "2" on the windows, we were so comfortably settled that no one deemed it worth while to move. As a matter of fact, on the Ger-

man railways, with their four or five classes, there is gentler gradation between class and class than in France or England; and between first and second—save that the former is upholstered in dark-red plush and the latter in light-green—the difference is hardly noticeable. The main difference is, I believe, in the price, and the fact that only six are allowed in the first-class against eight in the second. We extracted a good deal of amusement out of the fact that the several Workmen's and Soldiers' representatives made no mistake, and lost no time, in marking a first-class compartment for their own.

We had been somewhat perplexed on our arrival at the station to note that the two uniformed Workmen's and Soldiers' representatives had been joined by two civilians, each wearing the white arm-band of the revolutionary council. But presently one of the latter, hat in hand, came to the door of our compartment to explain. The naval authorities, he said, had requested that the Workmen and Soldiers should guarantee the safety of all Allied parties landing from civilian attack, and in consequence he had been sent along as a "hostage." At least the German term he used was one which could be translated as hostage, but after talking it over we came to the conclusion that the man's *rôle* was more analogous to

that of a "plain clothes" special policeman. There was one of these men attached to every party that made a train journey on the North Sea side (all stations in the Baltic littoral were reached by destroyer, so that no "protection" from the civilian population was necessary), and they were neither of any trouble nor—so far as I was ever able to discern—any use.

Leaving a handful of morning papers behind him as a propitiatory offering, our "hostage" bowed himself out of the door and backed off down the corridor—still bowing—to rejoin his colleagues in the first-class section of the car. In the quarter of an hour there was still to wait before the line was clear for the departure of our train, we had our first chance for a peep into Germany through the window of the Press.

The four-page sheets turned out to be copies of *Vorwärts,* the *Kölnische Volkszeitung und Handels-Blatt,* the *Weser Zeitung,* of Bremen, the *Wilhelmshavener Tageblatt,* and the *Republik.* The latter styled itself the *Sozialdemokratisches Organ für Oldenburg und Ostfriesland,* and the *Mitteilungsblatt der Arbeiter und Soldatenräte.* It claimed to be in its thirty-second year, but admitted that all this time, except the fortnight since the revolution, it had borne the name of *Oldenburger Volksblatt.* It had little in the way

of news from either the outside world or the interior, the few columns which it gave up to this purpose being filled with accounts of the formation of republics in various other provinces, and attacks upon members of the acting Government in Berlin. Evidently under some sort of orders, it mentioned the arrival of the *Hercules* at Wilhelmshaven without comment. A socialistic sheet of Hamburg, which turned up the next day, showed less restraint in this connection, for it stated that the Allied Commission had altered its decision not to meet the Workmen's and Soldiers' representatives, and that negotiations were now in progress in which the latter were taking a prominent part. Tangible evidence of the truth of this statement, it added, might be found in the fact that delegates from the Workmen and Soldiers accompanied Allied parties whenever they landed. *Vorwärts* tried to convey the same false impression to its readers, but rather less brazenly. The *Kölnische Volkszeitung* printed a dispatch from London, in which the *Daily Mail* was quoted as supporting the "*australischen Premierministers Hughes'* " demand of an indemnity of "*acht milliarden Pfund Sterling*" from Germany, and proceeded to prove in the course of an impassioned leader of two columns why the demanding of any indemnity at all was in direct violation of the

pledged word of the Allies, to say nothing of Wilson's Fourteen Points. A significant circumstance was the inclusion in each paper of a part of a column of comment on the movement of prices of *"Landesprodukte"* on the American markets.

The advertisements, which took up rather more than half of each sheet, proved by long odds more interesting than the news. These were quite in best "peace time" style. The *Metropol-Variete* (*Neu renoviert!*) informed all and sundry that *"Vier elegante junge Damen!"* disported themselves in its *"Kabarett"* every evening. The head-line of the great *"Spezialitäten Programm"* in the theatre was *"Die Grosse Sensation: Martini Szeny, genannt der 'Ausbrecher-König'!"* A number in the *Metropol's* program which appealed to us more than all the others, however, was one which was featured further down the list, for there, sandwiched between "KITTY DEANOS UND PARTNER, *Kunstschutzen,*" and "HANS ROMANS, *Liedersanger,*" appeared "LITTLE WILLY, *Trapez-Volant.*"

"And all the time we thought he was in Holland," dryly commented the American officer who made the discovery.

One could not help wondering respecting the "etymology" of "Little Willy," and whether that "Flying Trapezist" knew that he bore the favour-

ite Allied nickname for His ex-Royal and Imperial Highness, Frederick Wilhelm Hohenzollern, Crown Prince of Germany, etc., etc.

Evidence that Hun "piracy" had not been confined to their U-boats was unearthed in the discovery that the Adler-Theatre of Bremen advertised two performances of "DIE MODERNE EVA" for that very day—*Heute Sonntag!* "I ran across the chap who wrote 'The Modern Eve' somewhere out California way," said the same American who had spoken before. "He was some bore, too, take it from me; but he never deserved anything as bad as this, for the show itself was pretty nifty," and he began humming, in extemporaneously translated German the words of "Good-bye Everybody," the popular "song hit" from "The Modern Eve."

It was a Berlin theatre which advertised "2 *Vorstellungen* 2" of "Hamlet," which ended up the notice with "RAUCHEN STRENG VERBOTEN!" in large type. "If they burn the same stuff in Berlin that our Workmen and Soldier friends in the first-class are putting up that smoke barrage in the corridor with," said an airship officer, "it would have to be a case of '*Rauchen Streng Verboten*' or gas masks."

A number of booksellers advertised long lists of "*Neue Werke,*" but one searched these in vain

for any of the notorious polemics directed against the Allies, or yet for the writings of any of the great protagonists of the "Deutschland Ueber Alles" movement. Most of them appeared to be "Romances" or out-and-out "Thrillers." Bachem, of Köln, described *"Der Meister"* as *"Der Roman eines Spiritisten"*; *"Wettertannen"* as a *"Tiroler Roman aus der Gegenwart von Hans Schrott"*; *"Wenn Irland dich ruft"* as *"Der Roman eines Fliegers"*; and *"Der blutige Behrpfennig"* as *"Erzählung aus dem Leben eines Priesters."* Although one would have thought that the German people had had quite enough of that kind of thing from their late Government, every book I saw advertised in any of these papers was fiction.

Perhaps the most optimistic of all these advertisements was that of the "Kismet Laboratorium," of Berlin, in the *Republik,* which claimed to make a preparation for the improvement of the female form divine. Now that the war was over, it read, they no longer felt any hesitation in announcing that their great discovery was based on a certain product which could only be obtained from British India. As their pre-war stock had only been eked out by dilution with an not entirely satisfactory substitute, it was with great pleasure that they informed their many customers

that they hoped shortly to conclude arrangements by which the famous "Bakatal-Busenwasser" could again be furnished in all its pristine purity and strength.

So here, it appears, was an indirect admission to prove wrong the individual who averred that the German chemists could make out of coal tar anything in the world except a gentleman. It seems that all the time they had been dependent upon British India for even the "makings" of a lady. It would have been interesting to know what the "arrangements" were by which the supply was to be renewed. We were discussing that question when the train started, and a "flat" wheel on the "bogey" immediately under our compartment put an end to casual conversation.

On the outskirts of the town we passed by a great series of sidings closely packed with oil-tank-cars from all parts of the Central Empires. The most of them were marked in German, but with names which indicated beyond a doubt that they had been employed in serving the Galician fields of Austria. On many more the name of Rumania appeared in one form or another, and several bore the names of the British concerns from which they had been seized when the rich oilfields of that unlucky country fell to Mackensen's armies. A considerable number of cars

were marked with Russian characters, which led to the assumption that they had been seized in Courland or the Ukraine, and that they had originally run to and from the greatest of the world's oilfields at Baku, on the Caspian. There was a persistent report at one time that Germany was constructing an oil-pipe-line from the Galician fields to Kiel and Wilhelmshaven. Although quite practicable from an engineering standpoint, this appears never to have been seriously considered, probably on account of the great demand for labour and material it would have made at a time when both could be used to better advantage in other ways.

Seeing me standing at the window in the corridor looking at the oil-cars, my young companion of the steel-tyred auto came out of his compartment and moved up beside me. "As you will see," he said with his slow precision, "we never lacked badly for the oil for our U-boats. The one time that we had the great worry was when the Russians had the fields of Galicia. That cut off our only large supply. But luckily we had great stocks in hand when the war started, and these were quite sufficient for our needs until the Russians had been driven out of Austria. If they had remained there, it is hard to see how we could have kept going after our reserve was

finished. But they did not stay, the poor Russians, and they did not even have the wits to destroy the wells properly. We had them producing again at full capacity in a few months. Now, if they had been destroyed like the English destroyed the wells in Rumania it would have been different. *There,* in many places, we found it the cheaper to drill the new wells. Ah, the English are very thorough when they have the time, both in making and un-making."

As we passed through the suburbs of Wilhelmshaven we began to get some inkling of where the food came from. All back yards and every spare patch of ground were in vegetables. Nowhere in England or France have I seen the surface of the earth so fully occupied, so thoroughly turned to account. Some thrifty cultivators, after filling up their available ground with rows of cabbages and Brussels sprouts, appeared to have been growing beans and peas in hanging baskets and boxes of earth set up on frames. One genius had erected a forcing bed for what (to judge from the dead stalks) looked like cucumbers or squashes on the thatched roof of his cowshed. The only thing needed to cap the climax of agricultural industry would have been a "hanging garden" suspended from captive balloons.

As we ran out of the suburban area and into

the open country the allotments gave place to large and well-tilled farms, or rather to farms which had been well tilled in the season favourable to cultivation. At the moment work was practically at a standstill on account of the incessant rains which had inundated considerable areas and left the ground heavy, water-logged, and temporarily unfit for the plough. The results of a really bountiful harvest, however, were to be seen in bulging barns and sheds and plethoric haystacks and fodder piles. The surest evidence that there had actually been an over-supply of vegetables was the careless way in which such things as cabbages, swedes, and beets were being handled in transport. A starving people does not leave food of this kind to rot along the road nor in the station yards, evidences of which we saw every now and then for the next forty miles.

Practically the whole of the North Sea littoral of Germany between the Kiel Canal and the Dutch border—across the central section of which we were now passing—is the same sort of a flat, sea-level expanse, and has the same rich, alluvial soil, as the plains of Flanders. This region, like Denmark and Holland, had been largely given over to dairying before the war. The conversion of it from a pastoral to an agricultural country, by ploughing up the endless miles of meadows, has

resulted in a huge output of foodstuffs, and has put the people inhabiting it well beyond the risk of anything approaching starvation, no matter how long the blockade might be kept up. The officers accompanying us were quite frank in stating that the farmers had prospered and waxed wealthy by selling their surplus in the nearest industrial centres, such as Bremen and Hamburg. The pinch, they said, would come when the people began trying to restock their dairy farms again, for at least a half of the cattle had been killed off as their pastures had been put under cultivation.

Judging by the very few cattle in sight—in comparison with the number one has always seen in the fields in dairying regions—one would be inclined to estimate the reduction of stock at a good deal more than half. The fact that it is the local custom to keep the best of their stock stabled during the most inclement months of the winter doubtless had a good deal to do with the few animals in sight. As a matter of fact, there was really very little grazing left for those that might have been turned out. Sheep were also extremely scarce, but as this was not a region where they were ever found in great numbers one remarked their absence less than that of cattle.

But the most astonishing thing of all was that not a single pig was sighted on either the go-

ing or returning journey. The sight of what appeared to be a long-empty sty started a comparison of observations from which it transpired that no one watching from either of our two compartments had so much as clapped an eye on what the world has long regarded as Germany's favourite species of live stock. After that we all began standing "pig lookout," but the only "View Halloo" raised was a false one, the "*schwein*" turning out to be a *dachshund,* and a very scrawny one at that. Piqued by this astonishing porcine elusiveness, the "air" parties (upon which most of the land travel devolved) met in the ward-room of the *Hercules* that evening and contributed to form a "Pig Pool," the whole of which was to go to the first member who could produce incontestable evidence that he had seen a pig upon German soil. Astounding as it may seem, this prize was never awarded. The claim of one aspirant was ruled out because, on cross-questioning, he had to admit that his "pig" wore a German naval uniform and had tried, by vigorous lying, to head him off from a hangar containing a very interesting type of a new seaplane. Another claimant proved that he had actually seen a pig, but only to have the prize withheld when it transpired that he had flushed nothing more lifelike than the plaster image of a pig which,

cleaver in hand, stood as a butcher's sign in a village on the island of Rügen. A third claimant *would* have won the award had he chanced along five minutes sooner when the villagers were butchering a pig on the occasion when his party visited the Great Belt Islands to inspect the forts. Even in this case, though, we should have had to weigh carefully the evidence of an Irish-American officer of the same party, who said that it was "a dead cert that pig had died from hog cholera a good hour before it was killed!"

Although the fact that none of the members of the various Allied sub-commissions saw so much as a single live hog during the course of the many hundred miles travelled by train, motor, carriage, or foot in North-Western Germany, does not mean that the species has become extinct there by any means, there is still no doubt that the numbers of this popular and appropriate symbol of the Hun's *grossness* have been greatly reduced, and that *schweine* will be among the top items on their list of "immediate requirements" forwarded to the Allied Relief Committee.

Hurried as was this first of our journeys across Oldenburg, I was still able to see endless evidence not only of the intensive cultivation, but also the careful and scientific fertilization, which I had good opportunity to study later at closer

range in Mecklenburg and Schleswig. Stable manure and mulches of sedulously conserved decaying vegetable matter were being everywhere applied to the land according to the most approved modern practice. This I had expected to see, for I already knew the German as an intelligent and well-instructed farmer, but what did surprise me was clear proof that the supply of artificial fertilizers—phosphates, nitrates, and lime—was being fairly well maintained. Truck loads of these indispensable adjuncts to sustained production standing in station sidings showed that, and so did the state of the fields themselves; for the fresh young shoots of winter wheat, which I saw everywhere pushing up and taking full advantage of the almost unprecedentedly mild December weather, showed no traces of the "hungriness" I have so often noted during the last year or two in some of the over-cropped and underfertilized fields of England.

What with prisoners and the unremitting labour of women and children, Germany accomplished remarkable things in the way of production. The area of cultivation was not only largely increased, but the production of the old fields was also kept at a high level. In no part of the world have I ever seen fairer farmsteads than those through which the party inspecting the Great Belt forts

north of Kiel drove for many miles one day. They struck me as combining something of the picturesqueness of a Somerset farm with the prosperous efficiency of a California ranch. And it is as a California rancher myself that I say that I only wish I had soil and outbuildings that would come anywhere nearly up to the average of those throughout this favoured region of Schleswig. It is true that many of the people thereabouts are Danish, and I even saw a Danish flag discreetly displayed behind the neat lace curtains of one farmhouse. But, Danish or German, they are producing huge quantities of good food, enough to keep the people of less fertile regions of "starving Deutschland" far from want.

It was just before our arrival at Norddeich at the end of this first day's railway journey that I spoke to the German officer who had joined me at the window of the corridor about the very well-fed look of the people we had seen on the streets of Wilhelmshaven and at the stations of the towns and villages through which we had been passing. "It is true," he replied, "that we have never suffered for food in this part of the country, and that is because it is so largely agricultural. But wait until you go to the industrial centres. In Hamburg and Bremen, it is there that you will see the want and hunger. It is for those poor

people that the Allies must provide much food without delay."

Personally, I did not go either to Hamburg or Bremen, being absent with parties visiting the Zeppelin stations at Nordholz and Tondern at the time the Shipping Board of the Naval Commission was inspecting British merchantmen interned in these once great ports. A member of that board, however, assured me that he had observed no material difference in the appearance of the people in the streets of Bremen and Hamburg and those of Wilhelmshaven. His party had taken "pot-luck" at the Hotel Atlantic in Hamburg, where the food had been found ample in quantity and not unappetizing, even on a meatless day.

"But what of the poor?" I asked. "Did you see anything of the quarters that would correspond to the slums of London or Liverpool,"

"Germany," he replied, "to her credit, has very few places where the housing is outwardly so bad as in many British industrial cities I could name. We did not see much of the parts of Bremen and Hamburg where the working-classes live; but we did see a good deal of the workers themselves. I know under-feeding when I see it, for I was in Russia but a few months ago. But, so far as I could see, the chief difference between the men in the dockyards and shipbuilding

establishments of Hamburg and those of the Tyne and Clyde was that the former were working harder. They merely glanced up at us as we passed, with little curiosity and no resentment, and went right on with the job in hand. No, everything considered, I should not say that any one is suffering seriously for lack of food in either Bremen or Hamburg."

"No one is suffering seriously for lack of food." That was the feeling of all of us at the end of our first day in "starving Germany," and (if I may anticipate) it was also our verdict when the *Hercules* sailed for England, three weeks later.

# IV

## ACROSS THE SANDS TO NORDERNEY

THE names of "Norderney" and "Borkum" on the list of seaplane stations to be inspected seemed to strike a familiar chord of memory, but it was not until I chanced upon a dog-eared copy of "The Riddle of the Sands" on a table in the "Commission Room" of the *Hercules* that it dawned upon me where I had heard them before. There was no time at the moment to re-turn the pages of this most consummately told yarn of its kind ever written, but, prompted by a happy inspiration, I slipped the grimy little volume into my pocket. And there (as the clattering special which was to take us to Norddeich, *en route* to Norderney, turned off from the Bremen main-line a few miles outside of Wilhelmshaven) I found it again, just as the green water-logged fields and bogs of the "land of the seven *siels*" began to unroll in twin panoramas on either side. Opening the book at random somewhere toward the middle, my eye was drawn to a paragraph beginning near the top of the page facing a much-pencilled chart.

". . . The mainland is that district of Prussia that is known as East Friesland." (I remember now that it was "Carruthers," writing in the *Dulcibella*, off Wangerogg, who was describing the "lay of the land.") "It is a short, flat-topped peninsula, bounded on the west by the Ems estuary and beyond that by Holland, and on the east by the Jade estuary; a low-lying country, containing great tracts of marsh, and few towns of any size; on the north side none. Seven islands lie off the coast. All, except Borkum, which is round, are attenuated strips, slightly crescent-shaped, rarely more than a mile broad, and tapering at the ends; in length averaging about six miles, from Norderney and Juist, which are seven and nine respectively, to little Baltrum, which is only two and a half."

As I turned the book sideways to look at the chart the whole fascinating story came back with a rush. What man who has ever knocked about in small boats, tramped roads and poked about generally in places where he had no business to poke could forget it? The East Friesland peninsula, with its "seven little rivers" and "seven channels" and "seven islands," was the "take off" for the German army which was to cross the North Sea in barges to land on the sands of "The Wash" for the invasion of England. And this

very line over which our rickety two-car special was clinkety-clanking—I wished that "Carruthers" could have seen what a pitiful little old single-track it had become—was the "strategic trunk" over which the invading cohorts were to be shunted in their thousands to the waiting deep-sea-going barges in the canalized *siels*. There was Essen, which was to have been the "nodal centre" of the great embarkation, and scarcely had I located it on the map before its tall spire was stabbing the north-western skyline as we drew in to the station.

A raw-boned, red-faced girl, her astonishingly powerful frame clad in a man's greasy overall, lowered the barrier at the high-road crossing, the same barrier, I reflected, which had held up "Carruthers," Von Brunning, and the two "cloaked gentlemen" on the night of the great adventure. Four "land girls," in close-fitting brown corduroys, with great baskets of red cabbages on their shoulders, were just trudging off down the road to Dornum, the very "cobbled causeway flanked with ditches and willows, and running cheek by jowl with the railway track" which "Carruthers" had followed by midnight, with "fleecy clouds and a half moon overhead," in search of the Benser Tief. There was even a string of mighty barges towing down the narrow canal of the "Tief" when

we crossed its rattling bridge a few minutes later. And just as "Carruthers" described, the road and railway clung closely together all the way to Dornum, and about halfway were joined by a third companion in the shape of a puny stream, the Neues Tief. "Wriggling and doubling like an eel, choked with sedges and reeds," it had no more pretensions to being navigable now than then. It still "looped away into the fens out of sight, to reappear again close to Dornum in a more dignified guise," and it still skirted the town to the east, where there was a towpath and a piled wharf. The only change I was able to note in the momentary halt of the train was that the "red-brick building with the look of a warehouse, roofless as yet and with workmen on the scaffolds," had now been covered with red tile and filled with red cabbages.

It was at Dornum that "Carruthers" (who was masquerading as a German sailor on his way to visit a sister living on Baltrum) fell in at a primitive *Gasthaus* with an ex-crimp, drunken with much *schnappsen,* who insisted on accompanying him on a detour to Dornumersiel, where he had planned to do a hasty bit of spying. From the right-hand window I caught a brief glimpse of the ribbon of the coastward road, down the length of which the oddly-assorted pair—the Foreign

Office *précis* writer and the one-time "shanghai" artist—had stumbled arm-in-arm, treating each other in every gin-shop on the way.

"Carruthers' " detour to the coast carried him out of sight of the railway, so that he missed the little red-brick schoolhouse, close up by the track, where the buxom mistress had her whole brood of young Fritzes and Gretchens lined up along the fence of the right-of-way to wave and cheer our train as it passed. How she received word of the coming of the "Allied Special" we could only conjecture, but it was probably through some Workmen's and Soldiers' Council friend in the railway service. But even so, as the schoolhouse was three miles from the nearest station and had nothing suggestive of a telephone line running to it, she must have had her *banzai* party standing by in readiness a good part of the forenoon session. Hurriedly dropping a window (they work rather hard on account of the stiffness of the thick paper strap), I was just able to gather that the burden of the greeting was "Good morning, good morning, sir!" repeated many times in guttural chorus. If any of them were shouting "Welcome!" as one or two of our party thought they heard, it escaped my ears. They did the thing so well one was sure it had been rehearsed, and won-

dered how long it had been since those same throaty trebles had been raised in the "Hymn of Hate." If "Carruthers" spying visit to Dornumersiel resulted in anything more "revealing" than the dig in the ribs one of the youngsters got from the mistress for (apparently) not cheering lustily enough, he neglected to set it down in his story. This little incident prepared us for much we were to see later in the way of German "conciliation" methods.

"Carruthers," when he returned to the railway again and took train at Hage, made the journey from the latter station to Norden in ten minutes. The fact that our special took twenty is sufficient commentary on the deterioration of German road-beds and rolling stock. Norden, which is the junction point for Emden, to the south, and Norddeich, to the north, is a good-sized town, and we noticed here that the streets were beflagged and arched with evergreen as at Wilhelmshaven, doubtless in expectation of returning troops. While our engines were being changed, a couple of workmen, standing back in the depths of a tool-house, kept waving their hands ingratiatingly every time the armed guard (who always paced up and down the platform while the train was at a station) turned his back. What

they were driving at—unless co-operating with the children in the general "conciliation" program—we were not able to make out.

From Norden to Norddeich was a run of but three or four miles, but a bad road-bed and a worse engine made the journey a tedious if fitting finale to our painful progress across the East Frisian peninsula. Halting but a few moments at the main station, the train was shunted to a spur which took it right out to the quay where the great dyke bent inward to form a narrow artificial harbour. A few steps across the slippery moss-covered stones, where the falling tide had bared the sloping landing, took us to where a small but powerfully engined steam launch was waiting to convey the party to Norderney. Manned by naval ratings, it had the same aspect of neglect which characterized all of the warships we had visited. The men saluted smartly, however, and on our expressing a wish to remain in the open air in preference to the stuffy cabin, they tumbled below and brought up cushions and ranged them along the deck-house to sit upon. The Allied officers dangled their legs to port, the German officers to starboard, while the ex-sailor and the "plain-clothes" detective from the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council disposed themselves authoritatively in the wheel-house.

A few minutes' run between heavy stone jetties brought us to the open sea, where the launch began threading a channel which seemed to be marked mostly by buoys, but here and there by close-set rows of saplings, now just beginning to show their scraggly tops above the falling water. It was the sight of these latter marks—so characteristic of these waters—that reminded me that we had at last come out into the real hunting ground of the *Dulcibella,* where "Davies" and "Carruthers" had puzzled out the solution of "The Riddle of the Sands." Norderney and Juist and Borkum and the other of the "seven islands" strung their attenuated lengths in a broken barrier to seaward, and between them and the mainland we were leaving astern stretched the amazing mazes of the sands, alternately bared and covered by the ebb and flow of the tides. Two-thirds of the area, according to "Carruthers," were dry at low water, when the "remaining third becomes a system of lagoons whose distribution is controlled by the natural drift of the North Sea as it forces its way through the intervals between the islands. Each of these intervals resembles the bar of a river, and is obstructed by dangerous banks over which the sea pours at every tide, scooping out a deep pool. This fans out and ramifies to east and west as the pent-up

current frees itself, encircles the islands, and spreads over the intervening flats. But the further it penetrates the less scouring force it has, and as a result no island is girt completely by a low-water channel. About midway at the back of each of them is a 'watershed,' only covered for five or six hours out of the twelve. A boat, even of the lightest draught, navigating behind the islands must choose its moment for passing these."

"I trust we have 'chosen *our* moment' carefully," I said to myself after reading those lines and reflecting what a large part of their time the *Dulcibella, Kormoran,* and all the other craft in the "Riddle" had spent careened upon sand-spits. To reassure myself, I leaned back and asked one of the German officers if boats didn't run aground pretty often on that run. "Oh, yes, most often," was the reply, "but only at low water or when the fog is very thick. With this much water, and when we can see as far as we can now"—there was about a quarter of a mile of visibility—"there is no danger. Our difficulty will come when we try to return this evening on the low water."

It may have been my imagination, but I thought he put a shade more accent on that *try* than a real optimist would have done under similar circumstances. But then, I told myself, it was

hardly a time when one could expect a German officer to be optimistic about anything.

Heading out through the well-marked channel of the *Buse Tief,* between the sands of the *Itzendorf Plate* to port and *Hohe Riff* to starboard, twenty minutes found the launch in the opener waters off the west end of Norderney where, with its light draught, it had no longer to thread the winding of the buoyed fairway. Standing on northward until the red roofs and white walls of the town sharpened into ghostly relief on the curtain of the mist, course was altered five or six points to starboard, and we skirted a broad stretch of sandy beach, from the upper end of which the even slopes of concreted "runs" were visible, leading back to where, dimly outlined in their darker opacity, a long row of great hangars loomed fantastically beyond the dunes. Doubling a sharp spit, the launch nosed in and brought up alongside the landing of a slip notched out of the side of the little natural harbour.

The Commander of the station—a small man, but wiry and exceedingly well set up—met us as we stepped off the launch. Then, and throughout the visit, his quiet dignity of manner and ready (but not too ready) courtesy struck a welcome mean between the incongruous blends of sullenness and subserviency we had encountered

in meeting the officers in the German warships. He saluted each member of the party as he landed, but tactfully refrained from offering his hand to any but the attached German officers. It was this attitude on the part of the Commander, together with the uniformly courteous but uneffusive demeanour of the other officers with whom we were thrown in contact, that made the visit to Norderney perhaps the pleasantest of all the many inspections carried out in Germany.

Walking inland along a brick-paved road, we passed a large canteen or recreation club (with a crowd of curious but quite respectful men lined up along the verandah railings to watch us go by) before turning in to a fine new brick-and-tile building which appeared to be the officers' Casino. Leaving our overcoats in the reception room, we joined the dozen or more officers awaiting us at the entrance and fared on by what had once been flower-bordered walks to the hangars. As we came out upon the "tarmac"—here, as with all German seaplane and airship stations, the runs for the machines in front of the hangars are paved with concrete instead of the tarred macadam which is used so extensively in England and France—the men of the station were seen to be drawn up by companies, as for a review. Each company stood smartly to attention at the order of its offi-

cers as the party came abreast of it, and we—both Allied and German officers—saluted in return. As we passed on, each company in turn broke rank and quietly dispersed to barracks, their officers following on to join the party in the furtherest hangar, where the inspection was to begin. The discipline appeared to be faultless, and it was soon evident that the men and their officers had arrived at some sort of a "working understanding" to tide them over the period of inspection, if not longer.

The two representatives of the Workmen and Soldiers who had accompanied our party from Wilhelmshaven were allowed to be present during the inspection, and with them two other "white-banders" who appeared to have been elected to represent the men of the station. All other men had been cleared out of the sheds in conformity with the stipulations of the armistice. Some unauthorized individual—apparently a mechanic—who, halfway through the inspection, was noticed following the party, was summarily ordered out by the Commander. He obeyed somewhat sullenly, but though we subsequently saw him in gesticulative confab with some of his mates on the outside, he did not venture again into any of the hangars. That was the nearest approach to insubordination we saw in Norderney.

The officers of the station—now that we saw them, a score or more in number, all together—were a fine, business-like looking lot. All of them wore some kind of a decoration, most of them several, and among these were two or three of the highly-prized Orders *"Pour le Mérite."* As Norderney was the "star" seaplane station, that body of keen-eyed, square-jawed young flying officers undoubtedly included the cleverest naval pilots at Germany's disposal. What their many decorations had been given for there was, of course, no way of learning; nor did we find out whether the presence of so many of them at the inspection was voluntary or by order. Though, like their Commander, quiet and reserved, they were invariably courteous and willing in doing anything to facilitate the tedious progress of inspection.

There was an amusing little incident which occurred during the course of inspection in connection with a very smart young German officer, who, from the moment I first saw him at the door of the Casino, I kept telling myself I had encountered somewhere before. For half an hour or more—while checking the names and numbers of the machines in my notebook as inspection was completed—my mind was running back through one German colony or foreign settlement after

another, trying to find the scene into which that florid face (with its warm, wide-set eyes and its full, sensual mouth) fitted. Dar-es-Salaam, Windhoek, Tsingtau, Yap, Apia, Herbertshöhe—I scurried back through them all without uncovering a clue. Where else had I met Germans? The southern "panhandle" of Brazil, the south of Chile, Bagdad— That was the first name to awaken a sense of "nearness." "Bagdad, Bagdad Railway, Assur, Mosul," I rambled on, and just as I began to recall that I had encountered Germans scattered all along the caravan route from the Tigris to Syria, the object of my interest turned up those soulful eyes of his to look at one of the American officers clambering into the "house" of the "Giant" monoplane seaboat under inspection at the moment—and I had him.

"Aleppo! 'Du Bist Wie Eine Blume!'" I chortled exultantly, my mind going back to a night in June, 1912, when, the day after my arrival from the desert, the American Consul had taken me to a party at the Austrian Consulate in honour of some one or other who was about to depart for home—wherever that was. Young Herr X—— (I even recalled the name now) and his brother, both on the engineering staff of the Bagdad Railway, were among the guests, the former very smitten with a sloe-eyed sylph of a Greek

Levantine, whose mother (so a friendly gossip told me) had been a dancer in a café chantant in Beirut before she married the Smyrna hairdresser who afterwards made a fortune buying licorice root from the Arabs. The girl (there was no denying the lissome grace of her serpentine slenderness) was sipping her pink rose-leaf sherbet in a balcony above the open court when Herr X—— had been asked to sing along towards midnight, and the fervid passion of his upturned glances as he sung "Du Bist Wie Eine Blume" as an encore to "Ich Liebe Dich" had made enough of an impression on my mind to need no more than the reminder vouchsafed me to recall it.

Evidently (perhaps because I had not furnished him with a similar reason) Herr Romeo did not trace any connection between my present well-rounded, "sea-faring" figure and the sun-dried, fever-wrecked anatomy I had dragged into Aleppo in 1912, for I noted that his eyes had passed over me impersonally twice or thrice without a flicker of recognition. The explosiveness of my exultant chortle, however, must have assailed the ear of the German officer standing a couple of paces in front of me, for he turned round quickly and asked if I had spoken to him.

"No—er—not exactly," I stammered, adding, at the promptings of a sudden reckless impulse,

"but I would like to ask if you knew when Lieutenant X—— over there left the Bagdad Railway for the flying service?"

"He was at the head office in Frankfurt when the war began, and joined shortly afterwards," the young officer replied promptly, stepping back beside me. Then, as the somewhat surprising nature of the query burst upon him, a look of astonishment flushed his face and a pucker of suspicion drew his bushy brows together in a perturbed frown. "But may I ask—" he began.

"And his brother who was with him in Aleppo —the one with the scar on his cheek and the top of one ear sliced off," I pressed; "where is he?"

"Died of fever in Nishbin," again came the prompt answer. "But" (blurting it out quickly) "how do you know about them?"

Being human, and therefore weak, it was not in me to enlighten him with the truth, and to add that I was merely a second-class Yankee hack writer, temporarily togged out in an R.N.V.R. uniform to regularize my position of "Keeper of the Records" of the Allied Naval Armistice Commission. No, I couldn't do that. Indeed, everything considered, I am inclined to think that I rendered a better service to the Allied cause when

I squared my shoulders importantly and delivered myself oracularly of, "It is our business to know" (impressive pause) "all."

My reward was worthy of the effort. "Ach, it is but true," sighed the young officer resignedly. "The English Intelligence is wonderful, as we have too often found out."

"It is not bad," I admitted modestly, as I strolled over to make a note of the fact that the machine-gun mounting of one of the *Frederichhafens* had not been removed.

I could see that my young friend was bursting to impart to Lieutenant X—— the fact that he was a "marked man," but it was just as well that no opportunity offered in the course of the inspection. That the ominous news had been broken at luncheon, however, I felt certain from the fact that when, missing X—— from the group of officers who saluted us from the doorway of the Casino on our departure, I cast a furtive glance at the upper windows, it surprised him in the act of withdrawing behind one of the lace curtains. I only hope he has nothing on his conscience in the way of hospital bombings and the like. If he has, it can hardly have failed to occur to him that his name is inscribed on the Allies' "black-list," and that he will have to stand trial in due course.

It's a strange thing, this cropping up of half-remembered faces in new surroundings. The very next day, in the course of the visit to the Zeppelin station at Nordholz—but I will not anticipate.

Under the terms of the armistice the Germans agreed to render all naval seaplanes unfit for use by removing their propellers, machine-guns, and bomb-dropping equipment, and dismantling their wireless and ignition systems. To see that this was carried out on a single machine was not much of a task, but multiplied by the several scores in such a station as Norderney, it became a formidable labour. To equalize the physical work, the sub-commission for seaplane stations arranged that the British and American officers included in it should take turn-and-turn about in active inspection and checking the result of the latter with the lists furnished in advance by the Germans. At Norderney the "active service" side of the program fell to the lot of the two American officers to carry out. The swift pace they set at the outset slowed down materially toward the finish, and it was a pair of very weary officers that dropped limply from the last two *Albatrosses* and sat down upon a pontoon to recover their breath. It was, I believe, Lieut.-Commander L—— who, ruefully rubbing down a cramp which persisted in knotting

his left calf, declared that he had just computed that his combined clamberings in the course of the inspection were equal to ascending and descending a mountain half a mile high.

Practically all of the machines at Norderney were of the tried and proven types—*Brandenburgs, Albatrosses, Frederichafens, Gothas,* etc.—already well-known to the Allies. (It was not until the great experimental station at Warnemunde, in the Baltic, was visited a fortnight later that specimens of the latest types were revealed.) The Allied experts of the party were greatly impressed with the excellence of construction of all of the machines, none of them appearing to have suffered in the least as a consequence of a shortage of materials. The steel pontoons in particular—a branch of construction to which the Germans had given much attention, and with notable success—came in for especially favourable comment. (The Commander of the station, by the way, showed us one of these pontoons which he had had fitted with an engine and propeller and used in duck-shooting.) The general verdict seemed to be that the Germans had little to learn from any one in the building of seaplanes, and that this was principally due to the fact that they had concentrated upon it for oversea work, where the British had been going in more and more

for swift "carrier" ships launching aeroplanes. It was by aeroplanes launched from the "carrier" *Furious* that the great Zeppelin station at Tondern was practically destroyed last summer, and there is no doubt that this kind of a combination can accomplish far more effective work—providing, of course, that the power using it has command of the sea—than anything that can be done by seaplanes. It was the fact that Germany did *not* have control of the sea, rather than any lack of ingenuity or initiative, that pinned her to the seaplane, and, under the circumstances, it has to be admitted that she made very creditable use of the latter.

The one new type of machine at Norderney (although the existence of it had been known to the Allies for some time) was the "giant" monoplane seaboat, quite the most remarkable machine of the kind in the world at the present time. Though its span of something like 120 feet is less than that of a number of great aeroplanes already in use, its huge breadth of wing gave it a plane area of enormous size. The boat itself was as large—and apparently as seaworthty—as a good-sized steam launch, and so roomy that one could almost stand erect inside of it. It quite dwarfed anything of the kind I had ever seen before. Nor was the boat, spacious as it was, the only closed-in

space. Twenty feet or more above the deck of it, between the wings, was a large "box" containing, among other things, a very elaborately equipped *sound-proof* wireless room. The technical instruments of control and navigation—especially the very compact "Gyro" compasses—stirred the Allied experts to an admiration they found difficult to restrain.

One of the German officers who had accompanied us from Wilhelmshaven told me something of the history of this greatest of monoplanes. "This flying boat," he said, while we waited for the somewhat lengthy inspection to be completed, "was the last great gift that Count Zeppelin" (he spoke the name with an awe that was almost adoration) "gave to his country before he died. He was terribly disappointed by the failure of the Zeppelin airship as an instrument for bombing, and the last months of his life were spent in designing something to take its place. He realized that the size of the mark the airship offered to the constantly improving anti-aircraft artillery, together with the invention of the explosive bullet and the increasing speed and climbing power of aeroplanes, put an end for ever to the use of Zeppelins where they would be exposed to attack. He set about to design a heavier-than-air machine that would be powerful enough to carry a

really great weight of bombs, and the 'Giant' you see here is the result.

"As Count Zeppelin did not believe that it would ever be possible to land a machine of this weight and size on the earth, he made it a flying boat. But it was not intended for flights over water at all in the first place—that was to be simply for rising from and landing in. It was to be kept at one of our seaplane stations on the Belgian coast, as near as possible to the Front, and from here it was to go for bombing flights behind the enemy lines. But before it was completed experience had proved that it was quite practicable to land big machines on the earth, and so the 'Giant' found itself superseded as a bomber. It was then that it was brought to the attention of the Naval Flying Service, and we, recognizing in it the possibilities of an ideal machine for long-distance reconnaissance, took it over and completed it. Now, although a few changes have been made in the direction of making it more of a 'sea' machine, it does not differ greatly from the original designs of Count Zeppelin."

As to how the machine had turned out in practice he was, naturally, rather non-committal. The monoplane, he thought, had the advantage over a biplane for sea use that its wings were much higher above the water, and therefore much less

likely to get smashed up by heavy waves. He admitted that this machine had proved extremely difficult to fly—or rather to land—and that it had been employed exclusively for "school" purposes, for the training of pilots to fly the others of the same type that had been building. Now that the war was over, he had some doubts as to whether these would ever be completed. "We are having to modify so many of our plans, you see," he remarked naïvely.

On the fuselage of several of the machines there were evidences that signs or marks had been scratched out and painted over, and I took it that the words or pictures so recently obliterated had probably been of a character calculated to be offensive to the visiting Allied officers. One little thing had been overlooked, however, or else left because it was in a corner somewhat removed from the ebb and flow of the tide of inspection. I discovered it while passing along to the machine shops in the rear of one of the hangars, and later contrived to manœuvre myself back to it for a confirmatory survey. It was nothing more or less than a map of the United States which some angry pilot had thoroughly *strafed* by stabbing with a penknife blade. I was not able to study it long enough to be sure just what the method of the madness was, but—from the fact that the

environs of New York, Pittsburg, Philadelphia and Detroit had been literally pecked to pieces—it seemed possible that it might have been an attack on the industrial centres—perhaps because they were turning out so much munitions for the Allies.

There were two other maps tacked up on the same wall. One was of Africa, with the ex-German colonies coloured red, with lighter shaded areas overflowing from them on to British, Belgian, French, and Portuguese possessions. This may have been (I have since thought) a copy of the famous map of "Africa in 1920," issued in Germany early in the war, but I had no time to puzzle out the considerable amount of explanatory lettering on it. So far as I could see, this map was unmarked, not even a black mourning border having been added.

The third map was of Asia, and a long, winding and apparently rather carefully made cut running from the north-west corner toward the centre completely defeated me to account for. The fact that it ran through Asia Minor, Northern Syria, and down into Mesopotamia seemed to point to some connection with the Bagdad Railway—perhaps a *strafe* at an enterprise which, first and last, had deflected uselessly so huge an amount of German money and material.

The inspection over and the terms of the armistice having been found most explicitly carried out, we returned to the reception room of the Casino for lunch. Although the Commander protested that all arrangements had been made for serving us with *mittagessen,* our senior officer, acting under orders, replied that we had brought our own food and that this, with a pitcher of water, would be quite sufficient. The water was sent, and with it two beautiful long, slender bottles of *Hock* which—as they were never opened—only served to accentuate the flatness of the former.

We heard the officers of the station trooping up the stairs as we unrolled our sandwiches, and just as we were pulling up around the table some one threw open a piano in the room above our heads and struck three ringing chords. "Bang!" —interval—"Bang!"—interval—"Bang!" they crashed one after the other, and the throb of them set the windows rattling and the pictures (paintings of the station's fallen pilots) swaying on the wall.

"Prelude in G flat," breathed Major N—— tensely, as he waited with eye alight and ear acock for the next notes. "My word, the chap's a master!"

But the next chord was never struck. Instead, there was a gruff order, the scrape of feet on the

floor, and the slam of a closed piano, followed by the confused rumble of several angry voices speaking at the same time. Then silence.

"Looks like the majority of our hosts don't think 'Inspection Day's' quite the proper occasion for tinkling Rachmaninoff on the ivories," observed Lieutenant-Commander L——, U.S.N., after which he and Major N—— began discussing plans for educating the popular taste for "good music" and the rest of us fell to on our sandwiches.

The fog—that all-pervading East Frisian fog—which had been thickening steadily during the inspection, settled down in a solid bank while we sat at lunch. With a scant dozen yards of visibility, the Commander rated the prospects of crossing to the mainland so unfavourable that he suggested our remaining for the night at one of the Norderney hotels still open, and going over to Borkum (which we were planning to reach by destroyer) the next morning by launch. It was the difficulty in securing a prompt confirmation of what would have been a time-saving change of schedule which led Captain H—— to reject the plan and decide in favour of making an attempt to reach Norddeich in, and in spite of, the fog. The Commander shook his head dubiously. "My men who know the passage best have left the sta-

tion," he said; "but I will do the best I can for you, and perhaps you will have luck." He saw us off at the landing with the same quiet courtesy with which he had received us. He was a very likable chap, that Commander; perhaps the one individual with whom we were thrown into intimate contact in the course of the whole visit to whom one would have thought of applying that term.

Noticing that the launch in which we were backing away from the landing was at least double the size of the one in which we had crossed, I asked one of the German officers if the greater draught of it was not likely to increase our chances of running aground.

"Of course," he replied; "but the larger cabin will also be much more comfortable if we have to wait for the next tide to get off."

As the launch swung slowly round in the mud-and-sand stained welter of reversed screws, I bethought me of the "Riddle" again, and fished it forth from my pocket. It was disappointing to leave without having had a glimpse of the town where "Dollmann" and his "rose-brown-cheeked" daughter Clara had lived, but the fog closed us round in a grey-walled cylinder scarcely more in diameter than the launch was long. But we were right on the course, I reflected, of the dinghy which "Davies" piloted with such consummate

skill through just such a fog ("five yards or so was the radius of our vision," wrote "Carruthers") to Memmert to spy on the conference at the salvage plant on that desolate sand-spit. I turned up the chapter headed "Blindfold to Memmert," and read how, sounding with a notched boathook in the shallows that masterly young sailor had felt his way across the *Buse Tief* to the eastern outlet of the *Memmert Balje,* the only channel deep enough to carry the dinghy through the half-bared sand-banks between Juist and the mainland. Our own problem, it seemed to me, was a very similar one to that which confronted "Davies," only, in our case, it was the entrance of the channel where the *Buse Tief* narrowed between the *Hohes Riff* and the *Itzendorf Plate* that had to be located. Failing that, we were destined to roost till the next tide on a sandbank, and that meant we were out for all night, as there would be no chance of keeping to a channel, however well marked, in both fog and darkness.

Ten minutes went by—fifteen—twenty—with no sign of the buoy which marked the opening we were trying to strike. Now the engines were eased down to quarter-speed, and she lost way just in time to back off from a shining *glacis* of steel-grey sand that came creeping out of the fog. For the next ten minutes, with bare steerage

way on, she nosed cautiously this way and that, like a man groping for a doorway in the dark. Then a hail from the lookout on the bow was echoed by exclamations of relief from the German officers. "Here is the outer buoy," one of them called across to us reassuringly; "the rest of the way is well marked and easy to follow. We will soon be at Norddeich."

Presently a fresh buoy appeared as we nosed on shoreward, then a second, and then a third, continuing the line of the first two. Speed was increased to "half," and the intervals of picking up the marks correspondingly cut down. Confident that there was nothing more to worry about, I pulled out "The Riddle" again, for I had just recalled that it was about halfway to Norddeich, in the *Buse Tief,* that "Carruthers" had brought off his crowning exploit, the running aground of the tug and "invasion" lighter—with Von Brunning, Boehme, and the mysterious "cloaked passenger" —as they neared the end of the successful night trial trip in the North Sea. Substituting himself for the man at the wheel by a ruse, he had edged the tug over to starboard and was just thinking "What the Dickens'll happen to her?" when the end came; "a *euthanasia* so mild and gradual (for the sands are fringed with mud) that the disaster was on us before I was aware of it.

There was just the tiniest premonitory shuddering as our keel clove the buttery medium, a cascade of ripples from either beam, and the wheel jammed to rigidity in my hands as the tug nestled up to her final resting-place."

And very like that it was with us. It was a guttural oath from somewhere forward rather than any perceptible jar that told me the launch had struck, and it was not till after the screw had been churning sand for half a minute that there was any perceptible heel. It had come about through one of the buoys being missing and the next in line out of place, one of the Germans reckoned; but whatever the cause, there we were —stuck fast. Or, at least, we would have been with any less resourceful and energetic a crew. If their very lives had depended on it, those four or five German seamen could not have worked harder, nor to better purpose, to get that launch free. At the end of a quarter of an hour their indefatigable efforts were rewarded, and a half hour later we were settling ourselves in the warm compartment of our waiting train. The Hun has no proper sense of humour. Reverse the *rôles,* and any British bluejackets I have ever known would have run a German Armistice Commission on to the first sandbank that hove in sight, and damned the consequences.

# V

## NORDHOLZ, THE DEN OF THE ZEPPELINS

I HAVE written in a previous chapter of the great contrast observed between the *morale* of the men at Norderney, and the other seaplane stations visited by parties from the Allied Naval Commission, and that of those in the remaining German warships, accounting for the difference by the fact that the former had been kept busier than the latter, and that they had not suffered the shame of the "Great Surrender" which has cast a black, unlifting shadow upon the dregs of the High Sea Fleet. Whether the airships were kept as busy as the seaplanes right up to the end it would be difficult to say, but, whatever may be the reason for it, we found the *morale* of the great Zeppelin stations suffered very little if at all in comparison with that of the working bases of the naval heavier-than-air machines.

For all the barbarity of many of their raids, there was splendid stuff in the officers and crews of the Zeppelins which engaged in the campaign of "frightfulness" against England, and it is idle to deny it. In a better cause, or even in worthier

work for an indifferent cause, the skill and courage repeatedly displayed would have been epic. Considering what these airships faced on every one of their later raids—what their commanders and crews must have known were the odds against them after the night when the destruction of the first Zeppelin over Cuffley, in September, 1916, proved that the British had effectually solved the problem of igniting the hydrogen of the inner ballonettes—one cannot but conclude that the *morale* of the whole personnel must have been very high during even this trying period. If it had not been high, there would undoubtedly have been mutinies at the airship stations, such as are known to have occurred on so many occasions among the submarine crews. Even in the light of present knowledge, there is nothing to indicate that there had ever been serious trouble in getting Zeppelin crews for the most hazardous of raids. So far as could be gathered from our visits to the great airship stations of the North Sea littoral, this very excellent *morale* prevailed to the last; indeed, practically everything seen indicated that it still prevails.

Of the several German naval airship stations visited by parties from the Allied Commission, the most important were Althorn, Nordholz, and Tondern. The interest in the latter was largely

sentimental, due to the fact that it was practically wiped out last summer as the result of a bombing raid by aeroplanes launched from the *Furious*. It was known that little had been done to rehabilitate it as a service station since that time, and the Commission's airship experts' desire to visit what was left of the sheds was actuated by a wish to see what damage had been done rather than by any feeling that the station really counted any longer as a base of Germany's naval air service. Our visit to the ruins of Tondern, and what we learned there of the way it was destroyed, is a story by itself, and I will tell it in a separate chapter.

Germany had very ambitious plans for the development of the Althorn station, and it is probable at one time that it was intended that it should supersede even the mighty Nordholz as the premier home of naval Zeppelins. If such were really the intention, however, there is no doubt that it was effectually put an end to by a great fire and explosion which occurred there about the middle of last year, the material destruction from which —in sheds and Zeppelins—was vastly greater even than that from the British raid on Tondern. The Germans speak of this disaster with a good deal of bitterness, usually alluding to the cause as "mysterious," but rather giving the impression that they believe it to have been the work of

"Allied agents." If this is true, the job will stand as a fair offset against any single piece of work of the same character that German agents perpetrated in France, Britain, or America. Only the blowing up of the great Russian national arsenal in the second year of the war is comparable to it for the amount of material damage wrought. Althorn remained a station of some importance down to the end of the war, however, and that the Germans still expected to do important work from there was indicated by the fact that one of its new sheds housed the great "L-71," the largest airship in the world at the present time.

But it was in the great Nordholz station that the airship sub-commission was principally interested, not only for what it was at the moment—incomparably the greatest and most modern of German Zeppelin aerodromes—but also for what had been accomplished from there in the past, and even for what might conceivably be done from there in the future. Nordholz is a name that would have been burned deep into the memories of South and East Coast Britons had it been known three years ago, as it is now, that practically all of the Zeppelin raids over England were launched from there. The popular idea at the time—which even appears to have persisted with most Londoners down to the present—was that

airship stations had been constructed in Belgium, and that these alternated with those of Germany in dispatching raiders across the North Sea to England. A single glimpse of such a station as Nordholz is enough to show that the huge amount of labour and expense involved in building even a comparatively temporary aerodrome fit for regular Zeppelin work would have been fatal to the idea of establishing such installations in Belgium, or anywhere else where Germany did not feel certain of remaining in fairly permanent control. The station at Jamboli, in Bulgaria, for instance, is known to have been able only to dispose of one or two Zeppelins, and considerable intervals between flights were imperative for keeping them in trim. It would never have been equal to the strain of steady raiding.

There were other German airship stations within cruising distance of England, but Nordholz was so much the best equipped, especially in the first years of the war when Zeppelin raiding was the most active, that the most of the work, and by long odds the most effective of it, was done from there. There were grim tales to be told by that band of hard-eyed, straight-mouthed, bull-necked pilots—all that survived some scores of raids over England and some hundreds of reconnaissance flights over the North Sea—who re-

ceived and conducted round the Naval Commission party, though, unfortunately, we did not meet upon a footing that made it possible more than to listen to the account of an occasional incident suggested by something we were seeing at the moment.

The route which our party traversed from Wilhelmshaven to the Nordholz airship station—the latter lies six or eight miles south of the Elbe estuary in the vicinity of Cuxhaven—was a different one from any followed on our previous visits, all of which had taken us more to the south or east. It was through the same low-lying, dyked-in country, however, where the water difficulty, unlike most other parts of the world, was one of drainage rather than of irrigation. Great Dutch windmills turned ponderously under the impulse of the light sea-breeze, as they pumped the water off the flooded land. Cultivation, as in the region traversed to the south, was at a standstill, but overflowing barns—great capacious structures they were, with brick walls and lofty thatched roofs—proved that the harvest had been a generous one.

Instead of routing our two-car special over the all-rail route *viâ* Bremen, distance and time were saved by leaving it at a small terminus opposite Bremerhaven, crossing to the latter by tug, and

proceeding north in more or less direct line to our destination. Little time was lost in getting from one train to the other. The tug, which had been held in readiness for our arrival, cast off as soon as the last of the party had clambered over its side, and the short run across the grey-green tide of the estuary was made in less than a quarter of an hour. Four powerful army cars—far better machines, these, than the dirigible junk heaps we had been compelled to use at Wilhelmshaven—were waiting beside the slip, and another ten minutes of what struck me as very fast and reckless driving, considering it was through the main streets of a good-sized city, brought us to the station and another two-car special. Both going and returning, it was the best "clicking" lot of connections any of the parties made in the course of the whole visit, showing illuminatingly what our "hosts" could do in that line when they were minded to.

Swift as was our passage through the streets of Bremerhaven, there was still opportunity to observe many evidences of the vigorous growth it had made the decade preceding the outbreak of the war, and of the plans that had been made in expectation of a continuation of that growth. Blocks and blocks of imposing new buildings—now but half-tenanted—and the nuclei of what had been budding suburbs were more suggestive of

the appearance of a Western American mushroom metropolis after the collapse of a boom than a town of Europe. The railway station—a fine example of Germany's so-called "New Art" architecture—in its spacious waiting-rooms, broad subways, and commodious train sheds looked capable of serving the city of half a million or so which it had confidently been expected the empire's second port would become at the end of another few years. As things have turned out, Bremerhaven will at least have the consolation of knowing that it is not likely to be troubled with "station crushes" for some decades to come.

The astonishingly well-dressed and orderly crowd of a thousand or more waiting outside the portal of the station in expectation of the arrival of a train-load of returning soldiers made no unfriendly demonstration of any character. On the contrary, indeed, as at Wilhelmshaven, a number of children waved their hands as our cars drove up, and a goodly number of men solemnly bared their heads as we filed past. The special which awaited us at a platform reached after walking through a long vaulted subway running beneath the tracks consisted, like the one we had left on the other side of the river, of an engine and two cars. The rolling stock of this one was in better shape than that of the other, however, and with a

better maintained road-bed to run over, the last leg of our journey was covered at an average speed of over thirty miles an hour, quite the fastest we travelled by train anywhere in Germany.

For the most of the way the line continued running through mile after mile of water-logged, sea-level areas crossed by innumerable drainage canals and bricked roadways gridironing possible inundation areas with their raised embankments. At the end of an hour, however, the patches of standing water disappeared, and presently the bulk of the great sheds of Nordholz began to notch the northern skyline, where they stood crowning the crest of the first rising ground in the littoral between the Dutch frontier and the Elbe. With only a minute or two of delay in the Nordholz yards, the train was switched to the airship station's own spur, and at the end of another mile had pulled up on a siding directly opposite the main entrance.

The commander of the station, with two or three other officers, was waiting to receive us as we stepped out on the ground. Ranged up alongside this row of heel-clicking, frock-coated, be-medalled and be-sworded Zeppelin officers was an ancient individual of a type which seemed to recall the fatherly old Jehus of the piping days of Oberammergau. Every time the officers saluted,

he raised his hat, bowed low from the waist, and exclaimed, "Good morning to you, gentlemen." When the last of us had been thus greeted, he called out a comprehensive, "This way to the carriages, gentlemen," and trotted off ahead, bell-wether fashion, through the gate.

Here we found waiting four small brakes and a diminutive automobile, the sum total of the station's resources in rapid transit, according to the commander. Getting into the motor to precede us as pilot, he asked the party to dispose itself as best it could in the horse-drawn vehicles. Then, with old "Jehu" holding the reins of the first vehicle and men in air-service uniform—utter strangers to horses they were, too—tooling the other three, we started off along a well-paved road.

A long row of very attractive red brick-and-tile houses of agreeably varied design were apparently the homes of married officers. Our way led past only the first five or six of them, but a stirring of lace curtains in every one of these told that we were running the gauntlet of hostile glances all the way. One glowering Frau—though in the semi-negligée of a "Made-in-Germany" *kimono* of pale mauve, her Brunhildian brow was crowned with a "permanently Marcelled" *coiffure* of the kind one sees in hairdressers' windows—disdained all cover, and so stepped out upon her veranda just

in time to see the elder of her blonde-braided offspring in the act of waving a Teddy Bear—or it may have been a woolly lamb or a dachshund—at the tail of the procession of invading *Engländers*. She was swooping—a mauve-tailed comet with a Gorgon head—on the luckless "fraternisatress" as my brake turned a corner and the loom of a block of barracks shut "The Row" from sight, but a series of shrill squeals, piercing through the raucous grind of steel tyres on asphalt pavement, told that punishment swift and terrible was being meted out.

"More activity there than I saw in all of Bremerhaven," laconically observed the Yankee Ensign sitting next me. "Who said the German woman was lacking in temperament?"

Driving through the barracks area—where all the men in sight invariably saluted or stood at attention as we passed—and down an avenue between small but thickly set pines, the road debouched into the open, and for the first time we saw all the sheds of the great station at comparatively close range. Then we were in a position to understand with what care the site had been chosen and laid out. Occupying the only rising ground near the coast south of the Kiel Canal, it is quite free from the constant inundations which

threaten the alluvial plain along the sea. The sheds are visible from a great distance, but it is only when one draws near them that their truly gigantic size becomes evident. Of modern buildings of utility, such as factories and exhibition structures, I do not recall one that is so impressive as these in sheer immensity. Yet the proportions of the sheds are so good that constant comparison with some familiar object of known size, such as a man, alone puts them in their proper perspective.

The sheds are built in pairs, standing side by side, and on a plan which has brought each pair on the circumference of a circle two kilometres in diameter. The chord of the arc drawn from one pair of sheds to the next in sequence is a kilometre in length, while the same distance separates each pair on the circumference from the huge revolving shed in the centre of the circle. The whole plan has something of the mystic symmetry of an ancient temple of the sun. Of the half-dozen pairs of sheds necessary to complete the circle, four had been constructed and were in use. Each shed was built to house two airships, or four for the pair. This gave a capacity of sixteen Zeppelins for the four pairs of sheds, while the two housed in the revolving shed in the centre

brought the total capacity of the station up to eighteen—a larger number, I believe, than were ever over England at one time.

Scarcely less impressive than the immensity of the sheds and the broad conception of the general plan of the station was the solidity of construction. Everything, from the quarters of the men and the officers to the hangars themselves, seemed built for all time, and to play its part in the fulfilment of some far-reaching plan. Costly and scarce as asphalt must have been in Germany, the many miles of roads connecting the various sheds were laid deep with it, and, as I had a chance to see where repairs were going on, on a heavy base of concrete. The sheds were steel-framed, concrete-floored, and with pressed asbestos sheet figuring extensively in their sides. All the daylight admitted (as we saw presently) filtered through great panes of yellow glass in the roof, shutting out the ultra-violet rays of the sun, which had been found to cause airship fabric to deteriorate rapidly.

The barracks of the men were of brick and concrete, and were built with no less regard for appearance than utility. So, too, the officers' quarters and the Casino, and the large and comfortable-looking houses for married officers I have already mentioned. All had been built very re-

cently, many in the by no means uneffective "New Art" style, to the simple solidity of which the Germans seemed to have turned in reaction from the Gothic. Beyond all doubt Germany was planning years ahead with Nordholz, both as to war and peace service. They were quite frank in speaking of the ambitions they still have in respect of the latter, and (from casual remarks dropped once or twice by officers) I should be very much surprised if their plans for developing the Zeppelin as a super-war machine have been entirely shelved.

The road along which we drove to reach the first pair of sheds to be visited ran through extensive plantations of scraggly screw-pine, which appear to have been set—before the site was chosen for an air station—for the purpose of binding together the loose soil and preventing its shifting in the heavy winds. Wherever the trees had encroached too closely upon the hangars, the plantations had been burned off. Over one considerable area the accumulations of ash in the depressions showed the destruction to have been comparatively recent, and this I learned had been burned over, in the panic which followed the blowing up of the Tondern sheds by British bombing machines last summer, in order to minimize the risk from the raid which Nordholz itself never

ceased to expect right down to the day of the armistice.

The staggering size of the great sheds became more and more impressive as we drew nearer, and when the procession finally turned and went clattering down the roadway between one of the pairs, the towering walls to left and right blotted out the sky like the cliffs of a rocky cañon. Halfway through this great defile the officers of the station were waiting to receive and conduct us round. A hard, fit, capable-looking lot of chaps they were. Every one of them had at least one decoration, most of them many, and among these were two or three Orders *Pour de Mérite,* the German V.C. One at least of them—the great long-distance pilot, Von Butlar—was famous internationally, and few among the senior of them (as I was assured shortly) but had been over England more than once. They were the best of Germany's surviving Zeppelin pilots, and one was interested to compare the type with that of the pick of her sea-pilots as we had seen them at Norderney.

Running my eye round their faces as the mingled parties began moving slowly toward the side door of the first shed to be inspected, I recognized at once in these Zeppelin officers the same hard, cold, steady eyes, the same aggressive jaw, and the same wide, thin-lipped mouth that had

predominated right through the officers we had met at Norderney. These, I should say, are characteristic of the great majority of the outstanding men of both of Germany's air services. The steady eye and the firm jaw are, indeed, characteristic of most successful flying men, but it is the "hardness," not to say cruelty, of the mouth which differentiates the German from the high-spirited, devil-may-care air-warrior of England and America.

These Zeppelin pilots seemed to me to run nearer to the German naval officer type than did the seaplane officers. The latter were nearly always slender of body, wiry and light of foot, where (though there were several exceptions, including the great Von Butlar) the former were mainly of generous girth, with the typical German bull neck corrugating into rolls of fat above the backs of their collars. A Major of the R.A.F., who had been walking at my side and doing a bit of "sizing up" on his own account, put the difference rather well when he said, as we waited our turn to pass in through the small side door of the great grey wall of the shed: "If I was taking temporary refuge in a hospital, convent, or orphan asylum during a German air raid, I'd feel a lot better about it if I knew that it was some of those seaplane chaps flying overhead rather than some of

this batch. That thick-set one there, with the cast in his eye and the corded neck, has a face that wouldn't need much make-up for the Hun villain in a Lyceum melodrama. Yes, I'm sure these Zepp. drivers will average a jolly lot 'Hunnier' than the run of their seaplane men."

Up to that moment my experience of German airships had been limited to the view of them as slender silver pencils of light gliding swiftly across the searchlight-slashed skies of London, and three or four inspections of the tangled masses of aluminium and charred wood which remained when ill-starred raiders had paid the supreme penalty. I was indebted to the Zeppelins for a number of thrills, but only two or three of them (and one was in the form of a bomb which gave me a shower bath of plate glass in Kingsway) were comparable to the sheer wave of amazement which swept over me when, having passed from the cold grey light of the winter morning into the warm golden glow of the interior of the big shed to which we had come, I looked up and beheld the towering loom of the starboard side of "L-68," with the sweeping lines of her, fining to points at both ends, exaggerating monstrously a length which was sufficiently startling even when expressed in figures. The secret of the hold which the Zeppelin had for so long on the imagination of

the German people was not hard for me to understand after that. It was easy to see how they could have been led to believe that it could lay Paris and London in ruins, and that the very sight of it would in time cause the enemies of their country to sue for peace. One saw, too, how hard it must have been for them finally to believe that the Zeppelin had been mastered by the aeroplane, and that the high hopes they had built upon it had really crashed with the fallen raiders.

There were two Zeppelins in the shed we had entered—"L-68" and another monster of practically the same size. The former, with great irregularly shaped strips of fabric dangling all along its under side, suggested a gigantic shark in process of being ripped up the belly for skinning. Being deflated, the weight of its frame was supported by a number of heavy wooden props evenly distributed along either side from end to end. Its mate, on the other hand, being full of hydrogen and practically ready for flight, had to be prevented from rising and bumping against the yellow skylights by a series of light cables, the upper ends of which were attached at regular intervals along both sides of the framework, while below they were made fast to heavy steel shoes which ran in grooves set in the concrete floor. The latter contrivance—especially an arrange-

ment for the instant slipping of the cable—was very cleverly devised and greatly interested the Allied experts.

There were two or three things the popular mind had credited the modern Zeppelin with embodying which we did not find in these latest examples of German airship development. One of these was an "anti-bomb protector" on the top, something after the style of the steel nets erected over London banks and theatres for the purpose of detonating dropped explosives before they penetrated the roof. The fact that attempts to destroy Zeppelins by bomb had invariably—with the exception of the one brought down by Warneford in Belgium in 1915—resulted in failure, was doubtless largely responsible for this belief in the existence of a protecting net, whereas the reason for those failures is probably to be found in the fact that only about one bomb in a hundred will find enough resistance in striking an airship to detonate. At any rate, there were no indications that either the earlier or later Zeppelins we saw had ever been protected in this way. Indeed, we did not even seen a single one of the machine-guns, which every one had taken for granted were mounted on top of all Zeppelins to resist aeroplane attack, though these, of course, with their platforms, may well have been removed in the course

of the disarmament imposed by the armistice terms.

Nor had these late airships the bright golden colour of those that one saw over London in the earlier raids. That the refulgent tawniness of them was not due entirely to the reflected beams of the searchlights was proved by the uncharred fragments of fabric one had picked up at Cuffley and Potters' Bar. But the German designers had been giving a good deal of study to invisibility, since that time, with the result that these new airships were coloured over all their exposed surfaces a dull slaty black that would hardly reflect a beam of bright sunshine.

The cars, which were both smaller and lighter than those from the airships brought down in England, were all underslung, and none of them was enclosed in the framework, as had often been stated. Even these were not built entirely of metal, heavy fabric being used to close up all spaces where strength was not required. The bomb-dropping devices had been removed, but the numbered "switchboard" in the rearmost car, from which they could be released, still remained. The cars, free from every kind of protuberance that could meet the resistance of the air, were effectively and gracefully "stream-lined." The framework and bodies of the cars were made of

the light but strong "duraluminum" alloy, which the Germans have spent many years in perfecting for this purpose. A small fragment of strut which I picked up under "L-68" has proved, on comparison, considerably lighter in specific gravity than similar pieces from three of the Zeppelins brought down early in the war. Indeed, in spite of its admixture of heavier metals for "stiffening," the latest alloy seems scarcely heavier than aluminum itself.

The inspection of an airship to see that it had been disarmed according to the provisions of the armistice was, as may be imagined, rather more of a job than a similar inspection of even a "giant" seaplane. In a Zeppelin that is more or less the same size as the *Mauretania* the distances are magnificent, and while most of the inspection was confined to the cars, that of the wireless, with a search for possible concealed machine-gun mountings, involved not a little climbing and clambering. One's first sight of the interior of a deflated Zeppelin—in an inflated one the bulging ballonettes obstruct the view considerably—is quite as impressive in its way as the premier survey of it from the outside. No 'tween decks prospect in the largest ship afloat, cut down as it is by bulkheads, offers a fifth of the unbroken sweep of vision that one finds opened before him as he

climbs up inside the tail of a modern airship. Although airy ladders and soaring lengths of framework intervene, they are no more than lace-work fretting the vast space, and the eye roams free to where the side-braces of the narrow "walk" seem to run together in the nose. Only, so consummate the illusion wrought on the eye and brain by the strange perspective, that "meeting point" seems more like six hundred miles away than six hundred feet. The effect is more like looking to the end of the universe than to the end of a Zeppelin. No illusion ever devised on the stage to give "distance" to a scene could be half so convincing. All that was "cosmic" in you vibrated in sympathy, and it took but a shake of the reins of the imagination to fancy yourself tripping off down that unending "Road to Anywhere" to the music of the Spheres. You—

"Gee, but ain't that a peach of a little 'Gyro'?" filtering up through the fabric beneath my feet awakened me to the fact that the inspection of "L-68" having reached the rearmost car, was near its finish. Clambering back to earth, I found the party just reassembling to go to the carriages for the drive to the great revolving shed, which was the next to be visited.

Its central revolving shed is perhaps the most arresting feature of the Nordholz station. It is

built on the lines of a "twin" engine turntable, with each track housed over, and with every dimension multiplied twenty-five or thirty-fold. The turning track is laid in a bowl-shaped depression about ten feet deep and seven hundred feet in diameter. The floors of both sheds (which stand side by side, with only a few feet between) are flush with the level of the ground, so that the airships they house may be run out and in without a jolt. The turning mechanism, which is in the rear of the sheds and revolves with them, is entirely driven by electricity. The shifting of a lever sets the whole great mass in motion, and stops it to a millimetre of the point desired, the later being indicated on a dial by a needle showing the direction of the wind.

The Germans assured us—and on this point the British and American airship experts were in full agreement with them—that the revolving shed is absolutely the ideal installation, as it makes it possible to launch or house a ship directly *into* the wind, and so allows them to be used on days when it would be out of the question to launch them from, or return them to, an ordinary hangar. The one point against it seems to be its almost prohibitive cost. This central shed at Nordholz was designed some time before the war, and was completed a year or so after its outbreak. The Ger-

mans did not tell what it had cost, but they did say that the latter was so great—both in money and in steel deflected from other uses—that they had not contemplated the building of another during the continuance of the war.

Another interesting admission of a Zeppelin officer at Nordholz was to the effect that one of their greatest difficulties had arisen through the fact that it had been found practicable and desirable to increase the size of airships far more rapidly than had been contemplated when most of the existing sheds were designed. Thus many hangars—even at Nordholz, where practice was most advanced—had become almost useless for housing the latest Zeppelins. The proof of this was seen at one of the older sheds which we visited, where both of the airships it contained had been cut off fore and aft to reduce their lengths sufficiently to allow them inside. Thirty or forty feet of the framework of the bows and sterns of each, stripped of their covering fabric, were standing in the corners. They assured us that while an airship thus "bobbed" at both ends was not necessarily considered out of commission, it would take several days of rush work to get it ready for flight, and that during most of this time sixty to eighty feet of it—the combined length of the nose and tail which had to be cut off to bring it inside—would

have to remain sticking out, exposed to the weather.

To any one who, like myself, was not an airship expert, but had been "among those present" at a number of the earlier raids on London, the last shed visited was the most interesting of all, for it contained what is in many respects Germany's most historic Zeppelin, the famous "L-14." Twenty-four bombing flights over England were claimed for this remarkable veteran, besides many scores of reconnaissance voyages. All of the surviving pilots appeared to have an abiding belief in her invulnerability—a not unnatural attitude of the fatalist toward an instrument which has succeeded in defying fate. This is the way one of them expressed it, who came and stood by my side during the quarter-hour in which the inspecting officers were climbing about inside the glistening yellow shell of the historic raider in an endeavour to satisfy themselves, that she was, temporarily at least, incapable of further activities:—

"It will sound strange to you to hear me say it," he said, "but it is a fact that all of the officers and men at Nordholz firmly believed that L-14 could not be destroyed. Always we gave her the place of honour in starting first away for England, and most times she was the last to come back —of those that did come back. After a while, no

matter how long she was late, we always said, 'Oh, but it is old L-14; no use to worry about her; she will come home at her own time.' And come home she always did. All of our greatest pilots flew in her at one time or another and came back safe. Then they were given newer and faster ships, and sometimes they came home, and sometimes they did not. ——, who was experimenting with one of the smaller swift types of half-rigids when it was brought down north of London—the first to be destroyed over England—had flown L-14 many times, and come home safe, and so had ——, our greatest pilot, who was also lost north of London, very near where the other was brought down, and where we think you had some kind of trap. L-14 saw these and many other Zeppelins fall in flames and the more times she came home the more was our belief in her strength. The pilot who flew her was supposed to take more chances (because she really ran no risks, you see), and if you have ever read of how one Zeppelin in each raid always swooped low to drop her bombs, you now know that she was that one. Because we had this superstitious feeling about her we were very careful that, in rebuilding and repairing her, much of her original material should be left, so that whatever gave her her charmed life should not be removed. Although our duraluminum of the present is much

lighter and stronger than the first we made, L-14 still has most of her original framework; and, although improved technical instruments have been installed, all her cars are much as when she was built. You will see how much clumsier and heavier they are than those of the newer types. And now, for some months, we have used L-14 as a 'school' ship, in which to train our young pilots. You see, her great traditions must prove a wonderful inspiration to them."

A few minutes later I had a hint of one type of this "inspiration," when a pilot (who had fallen into step with me as we took a turn across the fields on foot to see the hangars of the "protecting flight" of aeroplanes) mentioned that he had taken part in a number of the 1916 raids over the Midland industrial centres. Knowing the Stygian blackness in which this region was wrapped during all of the Zeppelin raiding time, I asked him if he had not found it difficult to locate his objectives in a country which was plunged in complete darkness.

"Not so difficult as you might think," was the reply. "There were always the rivers and canals, which we knew perfectly from careful study. Besides, a town is a very large mark, and you seem to 'sense' the nearness of great masses of people, anyhow. Perhaps the great anxiety they

are in establishes a sort of mental contact with you, whose brain is very tense and receptive. Effective bombing is very largely a matter of psychology, you see."

I saw. Indeed, I think I saw rather more than he intended to convey.

The inspection over and everything having been found as stipulated in the armistice, we were conducted to the Officers' Casino for lunch. Each member of the party, as had been the practice from the outset, having brought a package of sandwiches from the ship in his pocket, it was intimated to the Commander of the station that we would not need to trouble him to have the luncheon served, which he said had been prepared for us. The same situation had arisen at Norderney and several other of the stations previously visited, and in each of these instances our "hosts" of the day had acquiesced in the plainly expressed desire of the senior officer of the party that we should confine our menu to what we carried in our own "nose-bags." Nordholz, however—quite possibly with no more than an enlarged idea of what were its duties under the circumstances—was not to be denied. A couple of plates of very appetizing German red-cabbage *sauerkraut,* with slices of ham and blood sausage, were waiting upon a large sidetable as we entered

the reception-room, and to these, as fast as a very nervous waiter could bring them in, were added the following: a large loaf of *pumpernickel,* a pitcher of chicken *consommé,* a huge beefsteak, with a fried egg sitting in the middle of it, for each member of the party, two dishes of apple sauce, and eight bottles of wine—four of white and four of red. The steaks—an inch thick, six inches in diameter, and grilled to a turn—were quite the largest pieces of meat I had seen served outside of Ireland since the war. The *hock* bore the label "*Dürkheimer,*" and the other bottles, which were of non-German origin, "*Ungarischer Rotwein.*"

"Although I'd hate to hurt their feelings," said the senior officer of the party, surveying the Gargantuan repast with a perplexed smile, "I should like to confine myself to my sandwiches and leave a note asking them to forward this to some of our starving prisoners. Since we've been feeding their pilots and commissioners in the *Hercules,* however, I suppose there's no valid reason why we should hesitate to partake of this banquet. I'll leave you free to decide for yourselves what you want to do on that score." We did. It was the American Ensign who, smacking his lips over the last of his steak, pronounced it the best "hunk of cow" he had had since he was at a Mexican

*barbecue* at Coronado; but it was the General who had a second helping of apple sauce, and wondered how they made it so "smooth and free from lumps," and what it was they put in it to give that "very delicate flavour."

Hung around all four walls of the room were perhaps a dozen oil paintings of flying officers in uniform, and although they bore no names, we knew (from what had been told us of a similar display in the reception-room at Norderney) that they were portraits of pilots who had lost their lives in active service. One—a three-quarters length of a small wiry man, with gimlet eyes and a jaw that would have made that of a wolf-trap look soft and flexible in comparison—I recognized at once as having been reproduced in the German papers as the portrait of the great Schramm, who had been killed when his Zeppelin was brought down at Potters' Bar. Another—the bust of a man of rather a bulkier figure than the first, but with a face a shade less brutal—was also strangely familiar. I felt sure I had seen before that terribly determined jaw, that broad nose with its wide nostrils, that receding brow, with the bony lumps above the eyes, and the tentacles of my memory went groping for when and where, while I went on sipping my glass of *Rotwein* and listening to

Major P——[1] and Ensign E—— comparing sensations on dropping from airplanes with parachutes.

"If the Huns," the former was saying, "had had proper parachutes most of the crews of the Zepps brought down in England could have landed safely instead of being burned in the air. Of the remains of the crew of the one brought down at Cuffley, hardly a fragment was recognizable as that of a man. But if—"

Like a flash it came to me. The warm, comfortable room, with its solid "New Art" furniture and the table stacked with plates of food and wine bottles, faded away, and I saw a tangled heap of metal and burning debris, sprawling across a stubble field and hedgerow, and steaming in the cold early morning drizzle that was quenching its still smouldering fires. Five hours previously that wreckage had been a raiding Zeppelin, charging blindly across London, pursued by searchlights and gun-fire. I had watched the ghostly shape disappear in the darkness as it shook off the beams of the searchlights, and when it appeared again it was as a descending comet of streaming flame streaking earthward across the

[1] Major Pritchard, who subsequently distinguished himself by landing from R-34, after its transatlantic flight, with a parachute.

north-western heavens. After walking all the rest of the night—with a lift from an early morning milk cart—I had arrived on the scene at daybreak, and before the cordon of soldiers which later kept the crowds back had been drawn. They had just cut a way through the wreckage to one of the cars, and were cooling down the glowing metal with a stream pumped by a little village fire-engine. Then they began taking out what remained of the bodies of the crew. Some had been almost entirely consumed by the fierce flames, and it is literally true that many of the blackened fragments were hardly recognizable as human. But there was one notable exception. By a miracle, the chest and head of the body of what had undoubtedly been the commanding officer had been spared the direct play of the flames. The fingers gripping the steering wheel were charred to the bone, but the upper part of the tunic was so little scorched that it still held the Iron Cross pinned into it. The blonde eyebrows, beneath the bony cranial protuberances, were scarcely singed, and even the scowl and the tightly compressed lips seemed to express intense determination rather than death agony. That portrait—and doubtless most of the others that looked down upon our strange luncheon party that day at Nordholz—must have been painted from life.

# VI

## MERCHANT SHIPPING

THE difference between the work of the Shipping Board of the Allied Naval Armistice Commission and that of the other sub-commissions was well defined by one of its members when he facetiously described it as "the only branch of the business that pays dividends." The work of the sub-commissions for the inspection of warships, seaplane and airship stations and forts, in that it was for the purpose of seeing that certain disarmament or demolition had been carried out, was largely destructive; that of the Shipping Board, on the other hand, which had as its end the return to the Allies of all of their merchant ships interned in German harbours, was constructive. The Shipping Board began to "pay dividends" (in the form of steamers dispatched for home ports) almost from the day of the arrival of the *Hercules* in Wilhelmshaven, and these continued steadily until the last of the interned ships surviving—a number had, unfortunately, been lost in mine-sweeping and other dangerous work in which the Germans had employed them—had found its way

back to resume its place as a carrier of men and merchandise and restore the heavily depleted tonnage of the country to which it belonged.

At the outbreak of the war there were ninety-six Allied vessels in German harbours, and all of these were promptly placed under embargo. Of these, eighty were British, fourteen Belgian, and two French. As all of the French and Belgian ships were small craft, their tonnage was practically negligible. Besides these embargoed ships, the Allied Commission had been directed to demand and arrange for the return of the thirty-one —twenty-one British, eight Belgian, one American, and one Brazilian—Allied ships which had been condemned in German Prize Courts since the outbreak of the war. Ten of these, it was subsequently learned when the question came up in conference, had been sunk, the Germans having made a practice of using Allied ships in their hands for all work involving great risk.

The question of the return of mercantile tonnage was taken up in the course of the first conference in the *Hercules* at Kiel. Admiral Goette was requested to produce a complete list of all Allied and American ships lying at the time in German ports, including all mercantile vessels which had been condemned in Prize Courts. This

list was to show clearly which vessels were considered seaworthy, and if unseaworthy, from what cause. It was also requested that information should be given as to which of these ships were fitted for mine-seeking or mine-sweeping, as it was planned to leave these temporarily in German hands in order to facilitate the efforts she was supposed to be making to clear the way for navigation. It was directed that ships ready to take the sea should be bunkered and ballasted at once, and that towage should be provided for sailing ships. All explosives were to be removed, and the Germans were ordered to provide a steamer to bring back the crews from the ports at which the embargoed ships had been delivered—the Tyne, in case of British vessels, and Dunkerque for French.

In respect to the ships considered unseaworthy, Admiral Goette was requested to arrange for all machinery, boilers, tanks, and spaces to be opened up, and the equipment made ready for inspection by the Sub-Commission for Shipping. Following this inspection, immediate facilities for dry docking and the carrying out of such repairs as the Sub-Commission considered necessary to prepare each vessel for sea were to be provided.

Although more than three weeks had passed since the signing of the armistice, Admiral Goette admitted at once on the presentation of these demands that not only had no seaworthy Allied ship started on its voyage home, but that nothing whatever had been done in the way of repairing any of those not seaworthy. He agreed, however, to do what he could to expedite matters from that time on in the case of the embargoed ships, but protested that, as the ships condemned in the Prize Courts had, according to German law, ceased to be Allied vessels, he had no authority to deliver them. On being told that the Allied Commission had been appointed to deal with the terms of the armistice, not to discuss matters of German or any other law, he finally gave way and agreed to furnish a list of the prize ships. He made the reservation, however, that the "question of legality," since it did not concern the conferring commissions, should be taken up later between the interested Governments.

Indeed, protests, as preliminaries to acquiescence, formed the major part of the German notes on the shipping question, as will be seen from the following extracts. "I herewith bring officially to your notice," the President of the German Sub-Commission wrote after the first con-

ference, (1) "that we do not recognize the obligations demanded by the Allies to deliver embargo ships on the 17th December by the fact that we are willing to deliver them at the earliest possible moment"; and (2) "that embargo ships proceeding out at the request of the Allies without having been reconditioned in a manner to put them in the same condition in which they were at the beginning of the war will leave prematurely under protest. Germany declines any further obligations with regard to these ships." Writing after the first extension of the armistice and referring to that fact, he intimates that "the period for fulfilling the provisions of Article XXX" (the repair of ships) "is also prolonged until January 17, 1919. Accordingly Germany is not obliged to hand over the interned ships before the 17th January. In spite of this Germany will make every endeavour in the future also to deliver these interned ships as soon as possible, and, as hitherto, will seek to carry out the terms of the armistice most loyally. . . . Without being under any obligation to do so, and merely in order to furnish further proofs of the loyal and business-like intentions of carrying out the terms of the armistice, measures have been taken for carrying on reconditioning, as far as that is possible and without

prejudice, in accordance with the newest regulations of the British Lloyd."

The same formula, it will be observed, was followed in connection with each subject under consideration. There was first the protest, then an intimation that the wish of the Allies should be carried out in spite of the fact there was no obligation to do so, and finally the invariable "patting of themselves on the back" on the part of the Germans for the "loyalty of spirit" thus displayed.

There was a subtle appeal to British sportsmanship in this paragraph from one of the communications of the President of the German Shipping Commission. "I again request you to signify your approval that the German embargo steamer, *Marie* (ex *Dave Hill*), now lying in Batavia, in recognition of her signal services during the war, both from the military point of view and seamanship, should be permitted first to put in with her crew to a German port; the ship will then, after handing over her German fittings, be delivered as quickly as arranged in the Tyne."

It was not stated what the "signal services" of the *Marie* had been in the war, nor for whom they had been performed; but I am under the impression she was the ship which was credited with the very fine exploit of running the British block-

ade of East Africa, delivering a cargo of arms and munitions to Von Letow, and then making her escape to the Dutch Indies. As this cargo was the one thing which enabled the East African campaign to be carried on to the end of the war (when it must otherwise inevitably have terminated a year or two earlier), there can be no two ways of looking at the "signal service" the *Marie* performed—for the Germans.

Owing to the difficulty in securing crews to take the ships to the Tyne, Admiral Goette requested that the Allied Commission should furnish in advance a guarantee of safety for those who could be induced to make the voyage. Admiral Browning's reply was a counter-demand for a guarantee of safety for the parties landing from the *Hercules* to carry out their inspections of German ships and air stations. "The word of my Commission is given here and now," he said, "in the presence of many witnesses, for the security of any German subject who may, in the course of the execution of the armistice, land in Great Britain. It is not customary to give written assurances regarding the honourable observation of the law of nations, but in the case of Germany we are obliged to ask for guarantees in writing because of the description which has been furnished us of the state of the country. We are obliged to ask before we

take any steps to see that the terms of the armistice are executed, that the parties should be able to perform their duties without danger, let, or hindrance."

Admiral Goette conceded this demand, and then went on to press his own in a statement highly illuminative of the abject position the German naval authorities found themselves in their relations with both the men of the warships and merchant sailors. "I wish to explain," he said, "that the request which we make is not to be construed into an expression of suspicion or distrust. It is merely in the interests of the men themselves, as we experienced in the case of the personnel of the submarines taken to English ports that the men were obviously under great apprehension that something might happen to them on coming into English parts. The guarantee is merely wanted as something definite to show the crews, as we have great difficulty in getting the men to believe us. That is why we also suggest that the German Commission should receive the minutes of the conference, as they would be quite enough for our purpose in order to be able to show the men in print that the declaration has been actually made."

The mutual guarantees were subsequently given in writing as follows:—

GUARANTEE BY THE GOVERNMENT AT BERLIN AS TO THE SAFETY OF MEMBERS OF THE ALLIED COMMISSION DURING THEIR STAY IN GERMANY.

Berlin.
*December* 6, 1918.

Foreign Office.
No. 172192.

The safety of the members of the Allied Commission and of the representatives of the United States is guaranteed by the Government of the State for the whole extent of German territory. All representatives and functionaries of the Administration of the State, the Federal States and Municipalities of the Army and of the Navy are requested to give them every protection and to assist them in every way in the unhindered execution of their work.

The Government of the State.

(*Signed*) EBERT.
HAASE.

GUARANTEE AS TO SECURITY OF GERMAN CREWS OF MERCHANT VESSELS

H.M.S. *Hercules.*
*December* 6, 1918.

The Allied Naval Armistice Commission.
No. 0379.

In reply to your verbal request of yesterday, 5th December, 1918, we hereby authorize you to

communicate to those concerned our assurance that the security of the crews sent over in merchant vessels, restored under Article XXX, Terms of Armistice, will be properly safeguarded on their arrival in British or French ports.

A copy of this document will be forwarded to the Admiralty in London and to the Ministry of Marine in Paris accordingly.

(*Signed*) M. E. Browning, *Vice-Admiral.*
(*Signed*) M. F. A. Grasset, *Contre-Amiral.*

To Rear-Admiral Ernst Goette.

Guarantees having been provided, the following instructions were handed to the German Commission regarding the carrying out of inspections under the terms of the armistice:—

1. The Allied Naval Commission shall be received on board each mercantile vessel to be inspected by officers of approximately equivalent rank and conducted through the vessel, visiting such places and compartments as the Allied Commission may wish.

2. All compartments are to be adequately lighted.

3. All vessels shall be cleared of men before and during the inspection, with the exception of those necessary to open up machinery, doors, hatches, etc.

4. If guns are mounted they are to be uncovered, and all explosives removed from the vessel.

The Allied inspection parties were instructed as follows:—

(*a*) To satisfy themselves that all Allied vessels are bunkered, ballasted, and sufficiently manned for the passage to the Tyne, in the case of British and Belgian vessels, and to Dunkerque, in the case of French vessels.

(*b*) To ensure that the necessary repairs and dry docking of unseaworthy ships are carried out by the German authorities.

(*c*) To ascertain that sufficient deck and engine stores are provided for the passage.

(*d*) That all ships' papers, including Log Book and Register, confiscated on internment are returned.

(*e*) That ammunition and explosives are landed from the vessels which have been used for war purposes.

The arrival of the lists of embargo and prize ships showed them to be scattered about among a large number of ports on both the North Sea and the Baltic. As lack of time precluded the possibility of visiting Danzig or any other Baltic ports east of Kiel, it was arranged that all seaworthy ships in these ports should proceed to Kiel for inspection. After completing the inspection of

the five ships in Wilhelmshaven (two of which were found to have machinery defects which made it impossible to deliver them without extensive repairs), the Shipping Board departed by train for Hamburg and Bremerhaven, where the greater part of their work was to be done. Before they rejoined the *Hercules* three days later at Kiel over thirty British ships had been inspected and the preliminary steps taken for their return to the Tyne.

Admiral Goette's report at the first conference respecting conditions at Hamburg and the vicinity had made it appear probable that a visit to the Elbe would be entirely out of the question, and even after guarantees of safety had arrived it still seemed that venturing there would be attended by uncertainty if not danger. "In the Elbe," the President of the German Commission had said, "power is entirely in the hands of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council, and Naval Officers have no authority or influence whatever. One of the chief supports of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council is the light cruiser *Augsburg*. There are also some torpedo-boats, mine-sweeping vessels and other small craft there which should be disarmed; but officers at Wilhelmshaven have no power to see to it, nor can they give any definite information as to what is there. . . . The Elbe is

much less under the influence of the Berlin Government than either Wilhelmshaven or Kiel. The Elbe Republic appears to have been much more radical than the others from the start, and has from the beginning of the Revolution refused to co-operate with the Naval Officers, while such co-operation was at once in effect in Wilhelmshaven and Kiel."

It is by no means improbable that Admiral Goette was quite sincere in this summary of conditions on the Elbe; indeed, so far as the lack of authority on the part of Naval Officers was concerned, it was an accurate statement of the case. But in assuming that this would necessarily make it impossible for the Allied Shipping Board to carry out their work he proved quite wrong. Contemptuous as they were of their ex-officers, the men, far from displaying any desire to interfere with the work of the Commission, proved themselves no less willing than their mates in Wilhelmshaven to help in any way they could. The Workmen's and Soldiers' Council took over the protection of the party from the moment of its arrival, and, save for a single incident which could hardly have been classed as "preventable," nothing of an untoward nature occurred in the course of the visit.

At Hamburg the party put up at the Hotel At-

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

IN THE ELBE, HAMBURG

RAILROAD STATION AT HAMBURG

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

lantic, where they reported that their comfort was extremely well looked after in every way. Occupying a wing to themselves and using a private dining-room, they saw little of the other guests. They were not allowed to linger in the foyer or any of the public rooms on the ground floor, and as soon as they had reached their rooms an armed guard of the Workmen and Soldiers took station at the entrance to the corridor. These precautions appeared quite unnecessary, as no signs of unfriendliness of any kind were in evidence.

The rooms were large and furnished with all their pre-war luxuriousness. The linen was abundant and of fine quality. The steam heaters had to be turned off to prevent the rooms becoming overheated. The response from the hot-water taps was immediate. The brass fittings were still in place, and there were no signs of *ersatz* towels, sheets, or even lace curtains. Soap was the only thing missing, but that difficulty was common to all Germany. Food (even on one of the days which was meatless) was both abundant and wholesome—"well up to the average in a first-class English hotel," as one of the members put it. There was an ample and varied wine list to order from, including—besides many Rhine and Hungarian brands—several French and Italian brandies and liqueurs. There was some discus-

sion over the cigars, the only point upon which the Commission were unanimous being that they were not tobacco, and that any member desiring to experiment in the effect of them upon a human being should do so upon himself, and in his own room. German "substitute" tobacco looks better than it smokes; in fact, the only way in which the Workmen's and Soldiers' guards attached to our parties were in the least obnoxious was through putting up "smoke barrages," and even these were avoidable except in turrets, magazines, shaft tunnels, and other enclosed spaces.

The inspection of the twenty-four British ships in the Elbe revealed the fact that it had been the German practice to convert the best of the embargo steamers into mine-layers, net-layers, seaplane carriers, and other types of war auxiliaries. These had been kept in the best of condition, and, allowing for the hard service they had been engaged in, were in practically as good shape as when first seized. The second-grade steamers and sailing vessels had merely been laid up and left to go to rack and ruin. Stripped of everything in the way of metal or gear that was likely to prove of use elsewhere, unpainted, uncared-for and covered with four-and-a-half years' accumulation of rust and filth, they presented a sorry sight. Although yielding little in the way of

metal or technical instruments, the sailing ships had furnished useful loot in the form of hempen ropes and canvas, of both of which they were stripped to the last ravellings.

There was one very interesting discovery made in connection with the inspection of these laid-up ships in the Elbe. *A number of them were found to have been filled with concrete, with the evident intention of using them as block ships.* Naturally, no explanation of what had been in the wind to prompt this action was volunteered, but the fact that the work had been done at a comparatively recent date pointed strongly to the probability that the Germans, stung to the quick by the blocking of Zeebrugge and Ostend, were preparing a reply, most likely against the entrance to the Tyne. One has only to look at the chart to understand that the latter is a readily "blockable" estuary—to any adequately equipped force able to reach the proper point. Needless to say, such a contingency was not unprovided against, and it would have been a near-miracle if even the most dare-devil leadership could have brought such a force halfway across the North Sea. Whether the armistice put an end to uncompleted preparations, or whether the plan was given up in despair before that time (perhaps through a failure to secure the necessary force of volunteers), there was noth-

ing to indicate, though doubtless revelations throwing light on this interesting mystery will be forthcoming from Germany before long.

Fortunately, the concrete had been put into these ships in the form of blocks instead of being poured, so that the clearing of their holds was not a serious matter.

The drives in motor-cars through the streets of Hamburg revealed the same well-dressed, well-fed crowds which had been so much in evidence in Wilhelmshaven, and not even in the docks or shipyards were there any signs of the starvation we had been assured prevailed in all the great industrial centres. The people were mildly curious but not in the least unfriendly. The only occasion on which anything unpleasant occurred was when a navvy, splashed by the mud from one of the leading cars, petulantly slammed his shovel through the glass of the next in line. The nerves and tempers of the three French shipping commissioners were the only things beside the glass which suffered seriously as a consequence of this contretemps. The Workmen's and Soldiers' guards promptly asserted their authority by arresting the captious culprit, profuse apologies for the indignity were offered by the German officers conducting the party at the time, and later the President of their Shipping Commission called on Com-

modore Bevan at the hotel to make formal expression of regrets.

There was a refreshing naïveté in the explanation offered by one of the German officers of the reason for this little incident. "It was all the fault of the chauffeur," he said. "The man used to drive for Admiral X—— of the General Staff, and he forgot that he must no longer let his car throw mud on the street workmen."

The German naval officer who received the Allied party on one of the British merchantmen was found in a state of considerable excitement. He had been fired at from the darkness the night before, he said, and missed by a hair. Interpreting this as a warning against wearing his naval uniform ashore, he had dressed in civil attire that morning, brought his uniform along in a parcel, and changed into it on board.

"You'd pity any one but a Hun for having to do a thing like that," was the dry comment of one of the British members of the party when this tale of woe was translated to him.

An instance of the unquenchable optimism of the German industrialist regarding the eagerly awaited future when the seas and the markets of the world are again open to him was furnished in the course of a visit to the great Blohm and Voss yards, which occupy about the same position

on the Elbe as do those of John Brown or Fairfields on the Clyde, or Harland and Wolff at Belfast. Several of the embargo ships were undergoing repairs here, and in going over one of these it was pointed out by Commodore Bevan that it ought to be ready to put to sea some days inside the limit set by the Germans for the completion of reconditioning.

"It is quite true the ship will be in a state to make the voyage to the Tyne by the time you say," replied Herr M——, the Director who was showing the party round, "but it will take a number of days longer to put it in the same state it was when placed under embargo. It would be a short-sighted policy on our part to send a badly repaired ship out of our yards at the present time, for it would be certain to react seriously in the matter of future orders. You must bear in mind, sir, that we have a world-wide reputation for thoroughness to maintain."

He appeared far from reassured when he was told that the condition he sent the British ships home in would have no effect whatever upon his future business with the rest of the world; moreover, he must have found that the longer he pondered that plain statement the less comfort there was to be extracted from it. It is astonishing how few Germans appear to realize that there are other

things besides workmanship and quality—to say nothing of long credits, state subsidies and pushful salesmen—that will profoundly affect the future of German trade.

The inspection of the eight interned vessels at Bremerhaven brought out nothing of more than routine interest, but the visit to the great home port of the North German Lloyd on the Weser, just as had the one to that of the Hamburg-Amerika Line on the Elbe, offered an incomparable opportunity to see at first hand the staggering blow which the war had dealt to German shipping and—through shipping—to German foreign trade. Although the fact that I had been attached for the moment to the sub-commissions inspecting seaplane and Zeppelin stations prevented my visiting Hamburg and Bremerhaven with the Shipping Board, an illuminating glimpse of the latter was offered me during the passage of the Weser in the course of the journey to Nordholz.

Although the day was overcast and there was some mistiness on the water, one could still see far enough up and down stream during the passage to note the effects of the complete stagnation which had settled from the outbreak of the war upon this second of Germany's great maritime ports. The name BREMERHAVEN had appeared in raised gilt letters across the stern of every one

of the hundreds of North German Lloyd steamers, and from New York to Shanghai, from Sydney to Durban, one was confronted with it in most of the ports of the world, but especially those of the Far East and Australia. I had seen it on the black-hulled, buff-funnelled freighters that were carrying Dutch goods from Ternate to Batavia, Chinese goods from Tientsin to Foochow, Japanese goods from Kobe to Nagasaki, British goods between Sandakan and Singapore. The "Crossed Keys" house-flag was known throughout the East as the symbol of that notorious German trade policy of heavy rate-cutting until competition had been killed and then a forcing up of tariffs to just under a figure which would be calculated to revive competition. But while the Germans had plotted thus ruthlessly to strangle foreign competition, between their own lines nothing of the kind was ever allowed to go on. The Hamburg-Amerika and the Norddeutscher-Lloyd, with three or four other German lines of secondary importance, had divided up the world into "spheres" of trade, with no line encroaching upon that of another except for certain inevitable "over-lapping" in passenger traffic on the Mediterranean and North Atlantic routes.

The lines of the Norddeutscher-Lloyd were stretched like the tentacles of an octopus over the

Indian Ocean and the Eastern Pacific, and at the outbreak of the war it was sucking trade from every British, French, Dutch, and Scandinavian line that plied to the ports of Australia, Malaysia, China, and the Philippines upon which it had fastened its slimy grip. The "N.D.L." was more than a German steamship line; it was Germany itself—Germany beginning to rivet down the edges of its "places in the sun." It was Herr Heiniken, the president of this great instrument of "Deutschland Ueber Alles," who, in Hongkong in 1911, exclaimed to a diplomat with whom he was discussing the Kaiser's Agadir bluff: "War! that, sir, is the one thing I want to avoid. What do we want to spend money and men on war when —within ten years at our present rate of progress —we can win everything that the most successful war could possibly give us? War might be a short cut to German world-power; and again, it might not. But hegemony by the trade route—provided only we continue to enjoy the freedom we have today—is sure. Our ships and merchants have already won half the battle, and victory is in sight if they are only allowed to go on."

Herr Heiniken was a hard-headed, clear-seeing man, and one shudders to think how much truth there was in the words quoted. But the slower, more round-about "trade route" to world-power

did not suit the hot-headed Junkers, and they forced their country to attempt to reach by the short-cut of war what was almost within the reach of their merchants and shippers. And that day at Bremerhaven we saw one of the results. There, sluddered down into the slime from which he rose, his tentacles all either severed or drawn in, was the remains of the "N.D.L." octopus. Miles and miles of what were once black-and-buff freighters and liners were lying so deep in harbour silt that it would have taken a dredger to get them out of their slips. The tangles of sagging, weed-fringed mooring cables running over and about them—for all the world as though they had been meshed in the web of a Gargantuan spider—accentuated the helpless immobility of craft that had once flaunted the arrogant red, white, and black bunting of the German merchant marine in the uttermost corners of the Seven Seas.

That river full of rotting ships was more than quiet—it was *dead*. The anchorage of the interned High Sea Fleet, off the inner entrance to Gutter Sound in Scapa Flow, was the first cemetery I had seen of the ships of the power whose ruler had proclaimed that its future was upon the sea. Bremerhaven was another graveyard of that ambient ambition. And the rusting hulks of the remains of the "N.D.L." fleet was not all that

was buried in the port of opulent Bremen. The ships were only the tombstones. Deep in the mud beneath their keels was sunk the crumpled framework of a plan which was a long way farther on the way to consummation than most of Americans and Britons will ever realize—Germany's scheme to attain world domination by trade. Germany will, in time undoubtedly have another merchant marine, and she may even begin striving before long toward world domination by any means, fair or foul, that offers a chance of success. But there is a slight probability that she will ever again hit upon any road that will take her so far toward the goal of *"Deutschland Ueber Alles"* as did the "trade route," the way to which is now all but closed. There was the dankness of mould in the wind that blew across the graveyard of the high ambitions that lie buried beyond hope of resurrection in the mud beneath the weed-foul bottoms of the ships of Bremerhaven.

The whole atmosphere of the stagnant waterfront was brooding and gloomy, and as we drew near to the landing I was conscious of a pronounced depression, for no man who loves the sea can remain unmoved at the sight of neglected ships. To this mood the cheery chatter of a young American Ensign, who had just sauntered out on deck after warming his toes at the char-

coal brazier in the tug's cabin, came as a welcome diversion.

"There's a lot of funny things chalked up on the walls around the docks," he said, running his eyes over the signs along the front, "but the one word that is written over the whole darn layout is 'Ichabod.' 'N.D.L.' is the only other to run 'one-two-three' with it. By the look of things I take it that stands for 'No D——m Luck.'"

# VII

## THE BOMBING OF TONDERN

THE German airship station at Tondern was by no means the largest of the enemy naval stations, but its position gave it an importance not measured by the number of its sheds or its airships.

Situated in Schleswig, not far from the Danish border, its ships were available equally for reconnaissance in the North Sea or the Baltic, including the Kattegat, and all the devious straits and passages between Denmark and the Scandinavian Peninsula. In a way, with the seaplane station at Sylt, it formed the first line of defence against the ever increasing British mine-laying sorties in the North Sea and Kattegat. The actual attacks against these mine-layers came to be left more and more to the seaplanes, though, in the first years of the war, considerable bomb-dropping was attempted here from Zeppelins. The vulnerability of the airship to aeroplane attack—and, notably, the destruction of a Zeppelin by a plane launched from the light cruiser *Yarmouth*—put an end to their work in this *rôle*, and compelled them to confine their activities entirely to reconnaissance.

It was the great effectiveness of the long observation flights from Tondern which determined the R.N.A.S. to make a strong endeavour to put an end to the menace by destroying the sheds. Besides greatly hampering the British mine-laying program they were also credited with supplying the Germans with invaluable information for both their surface raids and submarine attacks on the Norwegian convoys.

The only way in which Tondern could be reached was by machines launched from a carrier ship, and for this purpose the *Furious,* on account of her great speed and size, was perhaps better adapted than even a ship of the type of the *Argus,* in spite of the fact that the latter was specially built for the work, while the former was converted from a cruiser of the *Courageous* class. The raid, as any attempt of the kind must be, was prepared for some time in advance, and was only launched when it appeared that all conditions were especially favourable for its success. Probably the astonishing Admiralty intelligence service played an important, perhaps a decisive, part.

There was one point which favoured a raid upon Tondern as compared with an air attack upon one of the stations farther south. This was its proximity to the Danish border, which offered an alternative way of escape if return to the vicin-

ity of the carrier ship should be impracticable. This was fully reckoned with in planning the raid, for it was well understood that the presence of numerous chaser squadrons from the German coastal seaplane stations might effectually bar the way back to the *Furious* or her escorting destroyers. Of the raid from the British standpoint I can tell little or no more than was revealed in the bulletin issued by the Admiralty a few days after it took place. This said, in effect, that a number of aeroplanes, launched from a carrier ship, had carried out a raid upon the Zeppelin sheds at Tondern shortly after daylight; that, in spite of the vigorous anti-aircraft fire encountered, hits had been observed upon at least two of the sheds, and that it was believed that any airships they contained must have been destroyed; and that some of the pilots had been picked up at sea, while others had landed safely in Denmark. Two or three were still unaccounted for, and might have either been lost in the sea or been taken prisoner by the enemy. This number was subsequently reduced to one, and he, it was reckoned, must have sunk with his machine in the sea.

This was all the public were told of what was undoubtedly the most successful raid of its kind ever carried out, except for the usual more or less conflicting versions from Denmark and Holland.

No one seemed to know for certain whether any Zeppelins had been destroyed or not, and if the Admiralty Intelligence Department knew, it kept its knowledge to itself. The fact that the British mine-laying squadrons had, from that time on, less to report of Zeppelin activity in the Skager Rak was encouraging, however, and seemed to show that the Zeppelins were being kept out of harm's way.

Under the armistice agreement the Allied Naval Commission had the right of visiting any of the German naval air stations. This gave them an opportunity to see at first hand what damage had been inflicted in the Tondern raid. So one of the sub-commissions put this station upon their itinerary. One officer in particular—he had directed the raiding operations from the *Furious*—was especially anxious to go. But luck was against him, for the destroyer in which he was visiting the Borkum and Heligoland stations was delayed by fog, and he was too late to go with the Tondern party.

The efforts made by the Germans, first, to prevent this Tondern visit being scheduled at all, and, after it was decided upon, so to delay it that the party making it should only arrive after dark and thus have limited opportunities for observation, were a revelation of Hun psychology. "The

FLOATING DOCK FOR LIFTING SUBMARINES IN KIEL HARBOR

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Hun," said an officer of one of the air-station parties on his return to the *Hercules* one evening, "is one of the most truthful individuals in the world—just as long as he knows you are in a position to find out the truth anyway. But if he thinks he can prevent your finding out the truth by lying, there seems to be no limit to the lengths he will go." Then he went on to tell of how an unusually affable and courteous young German flying officer, who had conducted his party to Norderney two days previously, had taken every occasion to point out how much trouble, and how profitless and uninteresting a visit to Tondern would be. He said that the station was a long distance out of the way, that reaching it would involve trips of some hours by both train and destroyer, that it was not in a region under the control of the Wilhelmshaven authorities, and that there was nothing to see anyway, as the sheds had been dismantled before they were bombed, and that there were no airships in them at the time they were destroyed. Pressed on the latter point, he had reiterated the statement, adding that the raid, though it was well planned and executed, had been a great waste of effort. "It will take much time, and you will see nothing, nothing at all, I assure you."

"When I told him," continued the British officer,

"that we would go ahead with the visit for sentimental reasons, if for no others, he seemed a good deal upset, and this morning he did not turn up at all. The commander who came in his stead told me quite frankly that there were two Zeppelins destroyed at Tondern, and that he was to go in person with the party to see, as he put it, that it was 'properly received.' He had such an 'open-and-above-board' manner about everything that I'm inclined to think there's some 'catch' in his plan. It's probably on the score of time, or connections, or something of that kind. He says that, between destroyer, launch, and train, it is an eight-hour journey; but I have made up a schedule that will give us a good two hours of daylight there if there is no slip up on the Huns' end of the arrangements. We push off in the *Viceroy* at seven in the morning, and ought to be at Tondern by three. When we rejoin her again at Brunsbüttel's another matter."

Just where the "slip up" was meant to come became evident the next morning, when the German pilot was half an hour late in coming off to the *Viceroy*. As the sixty-mile run to Brunsbüttel was to have been covered at a rate of but fifteen miles an hour, a destroyer capable of doing close to thirty-five had no difficulty in making up the lost time, though once she was all but compelled

to anchor on account of fog, which closed down just before the outer Elbe lightship was picked up. The railway station, close beside the gates of the Kiel Canal, was in plain view from the deck of the *Viceroy,* but the delay in sending off the promised tug to take us to the landing, with a further delay in the starting of the waiting special, set back our departure from Brunsbüttel an hour behind the time scheduled.

As all the trains previously put at the disposal of the Allied Commission had been given the right of way over everything else on the line, we had good reason to believe that this time might also be made up in the course of the run across absolutely level country which separated us from Tondern. It was little more than one hundred miles. When, far from making up time, we continued to lose it—both by waits at stations and by slow running between them—our mounting suspicions that the Germans meant to keep us hanging about till after dark seemed to be confirmed. A protest to the Korvettenkapitän conducting the party brought only a shrug of the shoulders and the assertion that the bad conditions of the track and the engine made greater speed too dangerous. As there was no doubt that the engine was clanking and banging a good deal, and that the bogey immediately under our compartment had at least

one "flat" wheel, about the only reply we could make to this was to point out that the twelve-car train which had just passed us was doing at least twice our speed.

"Ah! but that train had the good engine," was the naïve reply. It hardly seemed worth while asking why our special had not also been provided with a "good" engine. Some sort of directions were given to the engineer, however, and there was sufficient acceleration of speed (at the expense, it appeared, of cutting off the steam heating the car) to bring us into Tondern station with something like three-quarters of an hour of daylight still to the good. This was so contrary to the plans of our hosts that the train was kept waiting in the station for fifteen minutes on the pretext that the party of officers from the town who were to accompany us had not yet arrived. The crowd on the platform, amongst which Danish types predominated, seemed to be genuinely friendly, but a couple of Red Cross girls who stepped forward to offer refreshments were waved savagely back by an armed guard.

The ragged silhouettes of the bombed sheds were in plain sight, but a mile or so distant, when (the German officers having arrived and taken their places in a spare compartment) the train, with much wheezing and clanking, started up again

and ran slowly out on to the spur towards the airship station. It would be but a few minutes more, we told ourselves, and there would still be light enough to see the general lay of things. The engine never increased its snail's-pace of three miles an hour all the way, and when it came to a stop at last, close beside a towering wall of steel, there was barely light enough to show the top of the wall against the dusky, low-hanging clouds of the early twilight. Our conductor had maintained his schedule to the minute. When we alighted he was voluble in his explanation of how the track of the spur was in such a state of disrepair that a greater speed would have been attended by the risk of derailment. There was nothing that we could say to refute this specious protestation, until, on our return journey an hour or two later, the engine (which had been making steam in the interim) whisked the two cars over that same spur at the giddy rate of twenty miles an hour—a good six times as fast as we had come.

The commander of the station, saying that, as the hour was late, we doubtless would desire to get the inspection over as quickly as possible, started off into the darkness at a brisk pace, the rest—British, Americans, and Germans—stumbling along in pursuit as best they could. Enter-

ing the shed by a side door near which the train had stopped, we found it so poorly lighted that the opposite wall showed but dimly, while the ends and the soaring arches of the roof were lost in dusky obscurity. At that first glimpse—probably the fresh smell of the cement under foot and the palpable newness of the pressed asbestos siding under one of the lights had something to do with it—the shed gave one the impression of being just on the point of completion. The description of the station furnished to us mentioned no such structure, so that we were rather at a loss. No explanation was volunteered, however, and our guide pushed on straight across, with the evident intention of passing out through the opposite door. But the senior Allied officer, an American, of commander's rank, stopped him with a request for more light. Half a dozen switches were then thrown over, and flooded the great structure with the brilliant radiance of countless incandescent globes. At once the huge building was revealed as a double Zeppelin shed of the largest size, just at the end of a long spell of restoration after being badly damaged. Fragments of duraluminum and charred pieces of wood and fabric, swept together in great heaps at the sides, told more of the story, and great fresh patches at several points in the roof the rest of

it. This was the shed in which the two Zeppelins, which the Germans admitted losing when the station was bombed by the planes from the *Furious*, had been destroyed. It was the least damaged of the sheds bombed, said the German commander, and it had been rebuilt with materials from two other sheds both of which were in process of demolition.

I saw the Yankee officer's eyes glistening as the picture those words conjured up flashed before them, and heard his muttered "Some raid that, by cripes!"

"If you are zatisfied, ve vill now go on to der oder sheds," the German commander said presently, and we followed him out into the deepening twilight.

Tondern had nothing of the regularity of plan of Nordholz, nor, luckily, the latter's magnificent distances. We found the two remaining sheds, or what was left of them, at less than half a mile from the first. One was nothing but a foundation, with prostrate steel pillars and girders scattered about over it, and numerous deep pools of water. I say deep, because it took two of his colleagues to fish out one of the party who stumbled into it, and he, by the irony of fate, was a stout German officer, with a deep bass voice and a magnificent vocabulary. We had to take the German's word

for it that this shed had been a small one, which they were demolishing because it had been obsolete, and not because it had been damaged by bombs.

Men were at work pulling down a section of the next shed as we came up, but they shambled away at a word from one of their officers. This one, said the station commander, was much the worst damaged of the two bombed in the raid, but, by good luck, there had been no airships in it at the time. The reason that it was more badly knocked to pieces than the other, in spite of the fact that, in the latter, the explosion of the Zeppelins was added to that of the bombs, was due to its doors having been tightly closed. This had caused the full force of the exploding bombs to be exerted against the walls and roof of the shed, whereas, in the first one, much of that force had been dissipated through the open front of the structure.

Save a flare or two by which the men had been working, there was no lights in this shed, but, picking our way over heaps of broken glass and asbestos sheeting, we managed to find a point from which the tangled and twisted girders of a still undemolished section of the roof were silhouetted against a stratum of western clouds, yet bright in the last of the sunset glow. For the

most part they bulged outward, where the upgush of the explosion had exerted its force against the roof, but in two places they bent sharply inward, and ended in jagged bars of torn metal. These were the places, the Germans told us, where two of the bombs burst through. One of them explained the remarkable fact of the great holes being almost exactly in a line down the middle of the roof by saying: "Poof! they fly so low they could not miss. Any airman could do that. But they did miss with one bomb, though," he said, brightening. "Come mit me. I show you," and he led the way to a spot forty or fifty feet in front of the wrecked building, where his electric torch revealed a round hole in the earth about five feet in diameter by four feet deep. "I think that bomb miss der top of der shed by one half-metre," he said, sighting along his outstretched arm at what was evidently reckoned the angle of a bomb from a low-flying machine. "Yes, it miss der shed by half a metre; but it kills five men chust der same. Not so bad after all, perhapds." Your Hun officer is ever a cold-blooded reckoner, and one of the reasons he is so useful is that he never lets sentiment blur his perspective.

From various things heard and seen in the course of that hurried night visit of inspection

to Tondern it would have been possible to piece out a fairly accurate picture of how the great raid must have appeared to the Germans stationed there at the time. It will be better, however, to set down a brief *résumé* of the connected account I heard at Nordholz from Von Butlar, Germany's most famous surviving airship pilot, who had, as will be seen, good reason for remembering what occurred on that eventful morning.

Von Butlar's [1] chief claim to distinction is his notable long-distance flights, the most remarkable of which was in connection with an attempt to carry medical supplies to General Von Letow in German East Africa. The German European forces there were being decimated by malaria at the time, and Von Letow had sent word by wireless that unless a supply of quinine reached him by a certain date he would be unable to carry on. As this campaign was diverting far too much British effort for the Germans to let it come to an end

[1] Since returning to England I have received information which, while confirming the fact that he commanded "L-59" when it was commissioned, makes it probable that Von Butlar was transferred to another Zeppelin before the East African flight was attempted. A pilot by the name of Bugholz is believed to have been in command on that occasion. Although Von Butlar's representation of himself as the hero of the remarkable African flight appears to have been a case of pure "swank," there is every reason to believe that his account of the Tondern raid is substantially correct.—L. R. F.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF KIEL

IN KIEL DOCKYARD

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

while any card still remained to be played, it was decided to make an attempt to send relief by Zeppelin. A rendezvous was arranged, and after some delay an airship, under Von Butlar's command, was dispatched from a station in Bulgaria, the nearest practicable point from which a start could be made. The delay alone caused the failure of the boldly conceived project, for, flying without a hitch of any kind, Von Butlar had already crossed the Mediterranean, Lower and Upper Egypt, and was well over the Sudan when Von Letow informed him by wireless that the British had occupied the point where he was to have landed, and that, as it was not practicable to rendezvous with him in a sufficiently open region elsewhere, it would be best for him to return home. This remarkable feat was successfully accomplished, Von Butlar bringing his airship safely to earth at a point on the Turkish shores of the Black Sea.

A scarcely less remarkable flight was one in which Von Butlar claimed to have crossed the North Sea to near the Yorkshire coast, to have passed north in sight of Rosyth, Invergordon, and Scapa Flow, to have flown across to Norway, gaining useful information respecting convoy and patrol movements, and back to his home station at Tondern or Nordholz. The Admiralty, which had

some information about this latter flight, had credited Von Butlar with having been in the air 104 hours, but he assured several members of the Commission that the actual time was little short of six days. He also claimed to have taken a useful photograph of the Grand Fleet at anchor at Scapa Flow.

At the time of the Tondern raid, Von Butlar was flying from there, one of the two Zeppelins destroyed being that which he commanded. As he speaks little, if any, English, the following account is a free translation of the story he related to us in German of what occurred on that occasion. "We always recognized," he said, "from the time that we learned that the British were developing swift flying-machine carriers, that Tondern was especially vulnerable to an attack of this kind, and we prepared against it as best we could. We had expected, however, that it would come in the form of a raid by seaplanes, which would, of course, have been comparatively heavy and slow, and which would have had to return to the sea to land, and against these our defence would probably have been effective. Where we deceived ourselves was in underrating the risks that your men were willing to take, such as, for instance, that of landing in the sea in an ordinary aeroplane

on the chance of being picked up in the comparatively short time such a machine will float."

"We were not prepared for such a raid at any time, but especially at the moment at which it occurred. We had had a protecting flight of light fighting aeroplanes at Tondern, but the landing ground had never been properly levelled. There had been many accidents, and a number of the machines were always disabled. This trouble became so bad toward the middle of last summer that it was finally decided to withdraw the protecting flight, which was badly needed at the moment elsewhere, until the landing ground had been improved. As usual, your Admiralty seem to have learned of this within a few hours and to have decided to take advantage of it at once. From the way your machines were flying when they appeared, I am practically certain that they felt sure of being opposed by nothing worse than gunfire.

"We received warning, of course, when the raiding planes were still over the sea, but, unless some of the machines at once sent up from the coastal stations could stop them, there was nothing for us to do but to give them the warmest reception we could with the anti-aircraft guns, in which we were fairly strong. Our gunners

were well trained, and if your planes had kept high, as they would have done if they had been expecting a strong attack by a superior force of protecting machines, they would most probably have been prevented from doing much harm, instead of just about wiping the station off the map, as they did.

"When we had the warning, most of those without special duties went to the *abri,* which had been provided at all stations for use in case of raids. But I was so concerned over the danger to my own ship that I remained outside. It was quite light by the time they appeared. At first they were flying high, but while they were still small specks I saw them begin to plane down, as though following a pre-arranged plan. It was all over in a minute or two after that. Part of them headed for one shed and part for the other. Diving with their engines all out—or so it seemed —they came over with the combined speed from their drop and the pull of their propellers. Down they came, till they seemed to be going to ram the sheds. Then, one after another, they flattened out and passed lengthwise over their targets at a height of about forty metres, kicking loose bombs as they went.

"Our guns simply had no chance at all with them. In fact, one of the guns came pretty near

to getting knocked out itself. It was so reckless a piece of work that I couldn't help noticing it, even while my own airship was beginning to burst into flames. One of the pilots, it seems, must have found that he had a bomb or two left at about the same time he spotted the position of one of the guns that was firing at him. Banking steeply, round he came, dived straight at the battery, letting go a bomb as his sight came on when he was no more than fifteen metres above it. Then he waved his hand and dashed off after the other machines, which were already scattering to avoid the German planes beginning to converge on them from all directions. It was one of the finest examples of nerve I ever saw.

"The precaution we had taken of opening the doors of the main shed saved it from total destruction, for the airships, instead of exploding, only burned comparatively slowly; but Tondern, as an air station, had practically ceased to exist from that moment."

# VIII

## THROUGH THE CANAL TO THE BALTIC

THE *Hercules* and her four escorting destroyers (the latter having been scattered during the last few days to various ports and air stations in connection with the inspection being pushed all along the German North Sea coast) were to have rendezvoused at Brunsbüttel by dark of the 10th, in order to be ready to start through the Kiel Canal at daybreak the following morning. At the appointed time, however, only the *Viceroy,* which had pushed through that morning with the "air" party en route to the Zeppelin station at Tondern, was on hand. The *Hercules,* which had got under weigh from Wilhelmshaven during the forenoon, reported that she had been compelled to anchor off the Elbe estuary on account of the thickness of the fog, and the *Verdun,* coming on from her visit to Borkum and Heligoland, had been delayed from a similar cause. The *Vidette* and *Venetia,* which were helping the "shipping" and "warship" parties get around the harbours of Bremen and Hamburg, signalled that their work

was still uncompleted and that they would have to proceed later to Kiel "on their own."

Returning to Brunsbüttel from the Tondern visit well along toward midnight, the absence of the *Hercules* compelled the four of us who had made that arduous journey in the *Viceroy* (the accommodations in the "V's" appear to be as elastic as the good nature of their officers is boundless), to spend the night aboard, and the impossibility of rejoining our own ships in the morning was responsible for the fact that we continued with her—the first British destroyer to pass through the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal—on to Kiel. It was a passage as memorable as historic.

An improving visibility toward morning enabled the *Hercules* to get under weigh again before daybreak, and in the first grey light of the winter dawn she came nosing past us and on up to the entrance of the canal. At each end of the latter there are two locks—lying side by side—for both "outgoing" and "incoming" ships. The right-side one of the "incoming" pair was reserved for the *Hercules,* while the other was kept clear for the *Regensburg*—flying Admiral Goette's flag—and the two British destroyers. The difference in level between the canal and the waters of the Elbe, varying considerably with the tide, is only a few feet at most, and the locking through,

as a consequence, only the matter of minutes.

The *Hercules* and *Regensburg* were already in their respective locks as the *Viceroy*, with the *Verdun* half a cable's length astern, came gliding up out of the fog, the former already beginning to show her great bulk above the side as she lifted with the in-pouring water. The attention of the score or so of Germans standing on the wall between the locks was centred, not on the *Hercules*, as one might have expected, but on the *Regensburg*, the most of them being gathered in a gesticulative group abreast the latter's bow. The reason for this we saw presently.

The handling of the British destroyers on this occasion was one of the smartest things of the kind I ever saw. Indeed, under the circumstances, "spectacular" is a fitter word to describe it than "smart." Without reducing the speed of her engines by a revolution, the *Viceroy* continued right on into the narrow water-lane of the lock at the same pace as she had approached its entrance. Certainly she was doing ten knots, and probably a good bit over that. On into the still more restricted space between the *Regensburg* and the right side of the dock she drove, while the waterside loafers—scenting a smash—grinned broadly in anticipation of the humiliation of the Englanders. Straight at the loftily looming lock

H. M. S. "VICEROY" ENTERING KIEL CANAL LOCK AT BRUNSBÜTTEL

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

gate she drove, and I remember distinctly seeing men who were crossing the canal on the bridge made by the folded flaps break into a run to avoid the imminent crash. And she never did slow down; she *stopped.* While there was still a score of yards to go the captain threw the engine-room telegraph over to "Stop!" and "Half-Speed Astern!" and, straining like a dog in leash as the reversed propellers killed her headway, stop she did. The superlative *finesse* of the thing (for they had seen something before of the handling of ships in narrow places) fairly swept the gathering dock-side vultures off their feet with astonishment, and one little knot of sailors all but broke into a cheer. Then the *Verdun* came dashing up and repeated the same spectacular manœuvre in our wake; only, instead of bringing up a few feet short of the lock gates, it was the stern of the *Viceroy,* with its festoon of poised depth-charges, that her axe-like bow backed away from after nosing up close enough to sniff, if not to scratch, the paint.

"You've impressed the Huns right enough, sir," I remarked to the captain as he rang down, "Finished with the Engines," and turned to descend the ladder of the bridge; "but wasn't it just a bit—"

"Yes, it was rather slow," he cut in apologetic-

ally in answer to what he thought I was going to say; "but I didn't dare to take any chances of coming a cropper in strange waters. Now, if it had been the 'Pen' at Rosyth, we might have shown them what one of the little old 'V's' can do when it comes to a pinch."

At the time I thought he was joking—that I had seen the extreme limit that morning of the "handiness" of the modern destroyer. But the *Viceroy*, astonishing as that performance had been, still had something up her sleeve. A week later, in the fog-shrouded entrance to Kiel Fiord, where a slip would have been a good deal more serious matter than the telescoping of a bow on a lock gate, I saw how much.

From the vantage of the bridge I saw, just before descending for breakfast, what it had been that had deflected the attention of the lock-side loafers from the *Hercules* to the *Regensburg*. That most graceful of light cruisers had paid the penalty of being left with a most disgraceful crew. *She* had rammed the lock gate full and square, and—from the look of her bows—while she still had a good deal of way on. We had remarked especially the trim lissomeness of those bows when she met us off the Jade on the day the *Hercules* arrived in German waters. And now the sharp stem was bent several feet to port,

while all back along her "flare" the buckled plating heaved in undulant corrugations like the hide on the neck of an old bull rhino. As it was the kind of repair that would take a month or more in dock to effect, there was nothing for the Germans to do but go on using her as she was. Luckily, she did not appear to be making much water. She followed us through the canal without difficulty, and—as the days when she would be called on to shake out her thirty knots were gone for ever—it is probable that she served Admiral Goette as well for a flagship as any other of her undamaged sisters would have. But they were never able to smooth out her "brow of care" during all our stay in German waters; indeed, I shall be greatly surprised if (to use the expressive term I heard a bluejacket in the *Viceroy* apply to it that morning) she does not come poking that "cauliflower nose" in front of her when she is finally handed over for internment at Scapa.

Although they would be dwarfed beside such great structures as the Pedro Miguel or Gatun locks of the Panama Canal, the locks at Brunsbüttel are fine solid works, displaying on every hand evidences of the great attention which had been given to providing for their rapid operation under pressure, as when the High Sea Fleet was being rushed through from the Baltic to the

North Sea. Having been enlarged primarily to "double the strength of the German Fleet," expense had not mattered in the way it would have had the canal been expected to justify itself commercially. The merchant traffic of the waterway for many years to come would not have demanded the double locks at either end; but naval exigencies called for speedy operation at any cost, and they were built.

Everything about the locks was in extremely good repair. Even the great agate and onyx mosaic of the name KAISER WILHELM KANAL, set between the double-headed eagles of the Imperial arms, was swept and polished to display it to best advantage. The locks were only the front window display, however, for the badly eroded banks of the canal itself testified to the same lack of maintenance as the railways were suffering from. As our pilot reported that the revolutionists had spent the night obliterating all the Imperial names—such as *Kaiserstrasse* and *Kronprintzstrasse*—in Brunsbüttel, one felt safe in assuming that the gaudy mosaic on the lock wall had been furbished as a decoration, not as a symbol.

The *Hercules,* having been raised to the proper level, was locked out into the canal, along which she proceeded at the steady six-knot speed laid

down as the limit not to be exceeded by ships of her size. Although of considerably less displacement than a number of the largest of the German capital ships, she was of greater draught than any of these, and even the burning of several hundred tons of coal in the voyage from Rosyth still left her drawing slightly more than the thirty odd feet that the German naval command had set as the limit. This had been figured out in advance, however, and an oiling all round of the destroyers before leaving Wilhelmshaven had brought her up just the few inches necessary to making the passage without inflicting injury to herself or to the canal.

The *Hercules* had traversed about a mile of the canal before the *Viceroy* was locked out to follow in her wake, and something like that interval was preserved throughout most of the passage. The *Verdun* kept about a quarter of a mile astern of the *Viceroy,* with the *Regensburg*—but so far back as to be out of sight—bringing up the rear. Two squat patrol launches—one on either quarter, a couple of hundred yards astern—followed the *Hercules* all the way, but for just what purpose we could not make out.

For the first few miles the country on either side of the canal was of the same low-lying nature as that through which all of our railway journeys

from Wilhelmshaven had been made. Ditched and dyked marshland alternated with stretches of bog and broad sheets of stagnant water where the drainage system had proved unequal to carrying off the overflow in the inundations following the winter rains. Cultivation was at a standstill here, probably until the water-logged soil dried out in the spring. Like the East Frisian peninsula, the region was essentially a grazing rather than an agricultural one, and the farmers were paying the penalty of having broken up grassland that was only dry enough for cultivation during a few months of the year. Cattle were scarce, sheep scarcer, and such of the inhabitants as were visible around the dismal farmsteads had the dull, purposeless air of people with nothing to do and plenty of time to do it in.

As we fared inland only the gradually heightening banks told that the country was increasing in elevation. Ponds and bogs were still frequent, and it was not until the first low hills were reached that there appeared to be enough drainage for the land to shake itself free of water. Here the country took on a more cheerful aspect, due principally to the fact that the people, many of whom were working, seemed less "bogged down"—mentally and physically—than their countrymen in the water-logged areas near the sea. Most of

SEMAPHORE STATION ON KIEL CANAL, FROM "HERCULES"

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

them were capable of recognizing us as Allied warships (something which few of the others appeared to have done), and when this had sunk home they usually hurried down to the bank of the canal for a closer view. Most of these isolated farming people were undemonstrative, and it was not until the more sophisticated inhabitants of the villages and towns were encountered that women and children were seen to wave their hands and men to doff their hats and bow. Most of the population, both agricultural and industrial, is found toward the Kiel rather than the Brunsbüttel end of the canal.

At one point we came upon two men and a girl feverishly engaged in skinning a horse, which appeared to have dropped dead in the furrow. Or rather, they had already skinned it and were busy cutting up the carcass. Watching through my glass from the bridge of the *Viceroy,* I saw all three of them rush helter-skelter over a hill and out of sight as the *Hercules* came abreast of them, only to hurry back and resume their grisly work when she had disappeared around a bend just ahead. When they again took to their heels on sighting the *Viceroy,* I asked the pilot what they were afraid of. The law required, he replied, that the authorities should be notified of the death of any head of live stock in order that the meat (in

case it was deemed fit for human consumption) should be distributed through the regular rationing channels. These people, he thought, were in the act of stealing their own dead horse, and doubtless their guilty consciences made them fear they would be reported and delivered up to justice.

Since witnessing this incident I have found myself rather less inclined to dwell in retrospect on that huge, juicy "beefsteak" I had devoured with such gusto when it was the *pièce de résistance* on the menu of our luncheon at the Nordholz Zeppelin station a couple of days previously.

Through the low country the construction of the canal had evidently been only a matter of dredging, but the multiplication in size and number of the "dumps" as the elevation increased showed that there had been places where digging on an extensive scale had been necessary, especially in connection with the widening and deepening operations. The fact that most of the "dumps" appeared to consist of earth of a very loose and sandy nature, some of them so much so that they had been planted thickly with young trees to prevent their being shifted by the winds, showed that the excavation problem had been a comparatively simple one, more of the nature of that at Suez

than Panama, where so much of the way had to be blasted through solid rock.

The looseness of the earth had made it necessary to cut the banks at as low an angle as forty-five degrees in places to prevent caving, and at these points the under-water part of the channel was faced with roughly cut stone to minimize erosion. As this work was only carried a few feet above the surface of the water, it required but slight speed on the part of a large ship to produce a wave high enough to splash over on to the unprotected earth and bring it down in slides. This had doubtless happened very often in the course of the frequent shuttling to and fro of the High Sea Fleet, for the stonework was heavily undermined in many places, with few signs to indicate that much had been done in the way of repairs.

Except in the locks (and even there the concrete was cracking badly in places, particularly at the Kiel end), the canal shows many evidences of the haste of its construction and the serious deterioration it has suffered from heavy use and poor maintenance. It will require much money and labour to put it in proper condition, and neither of these is likely to be over plentiful in Germany for some years to come.

Our first glimpse of Allied prisoners in their

"natural habitat" occurred at a point about twenty miles inland from Brunsbüttel, where a new and very lofty railway viaduct was being thrown across the canal. The extensive groups of huts along the bank in the shadow of the half-completed final span of steel looked, from the distance, like ordinary workmen's quarters. As we drew nearer, however, broad belts of barbed wire surrounding those on the right side suggested that they were used as a prison camp even before our glasses had revealed the motley clad group on the bank waving to the *Hercules*. As the *Viceroy* came abreast the excited and constantly augmenting crowd, we saw that the uniforms were mostly French and Russian, though there were three or four men in the grey of Italy and at least one with the unmistakable cap of the Serbs. A hulking chap in khaki, whom I was making the object of an especially close scrutiny on the chance that he might be British or American, put an end to doubt by slapping his chest resoundingly and announcing proudly, "*Je suis Belge!*" From the fact that they were all in good spirits, we took it that they were getting enough to eat and that prospects for repatriation were favourable.

We had quite given up hope of sighting any British when suddenly, from behind a barbed-wire barrier fencing off the last groups of huts,

rang out a cry of " 'Ow's ol' Blighty?" Sweeping my glass round to the quarter from whence the query came, I focussed on a phiz which, despite its mask of lather, I should have recognized as Cockney just as surely in Korea or Katmandu as on the banks of the Kiel Canal. Waving his brush jauntily in response to the salvo of delighted howls boomed out by the bluejackets lining the starboard rail, he turned back to the little pocket mirror on the side of the hut and resumed his interrupted shave.

"Can you beat that, I ask you?" gasped an American Flying officer who had just clambered up to the bridge. "Here it is the first time that 'Tommy' has seen his country's flag in anywhere from one to four years; and yet, even when he must know he could get a lift home for the asking, all he does is to—go on scraping his face! I say, can you beat it?"

The captain did not reply, but his indulgent grin indicated a sympathetic understanding of "British repressiveness."

But if this particular "Tommy" had been somewhat casual in his greeting, there was nothing to complain of on that score in the reception given us by the next British prisoners we encountered, a few miles further along. The incident—one of the most dramatic of the visit—occurred just after

the *Hercules* had passed under the great railway viaduct which crosses the canal almost midway between Brunsbüttel and Kiel. Wherever practicable, I might explain, all railways have been carried across the canal at a height sufficient to allow even the lofty topmasts of the German warships to pass under by a comfortable margin. Not one of the several viaducts runs much under two hundred feet above the canal, and to attain this height at an easy grade long approaches have been necessary. Some of these—partly steel trestle, partly embankment—stretched beyond eyescope to left and right; but at the viaduct in question the ascent was made by means of two great spiral loops at either end.

A segment of the loop on the left ran close beside the canal in the form of a steep embankment, and as the *Hercules* glided under the viaduct I saw (we had closed up to within a few hundred yards of her at the time) a long train of passenger cars, drawn by two puffing engines, just beginning the heavy climb. Suddenly I caught the flash of what I took to be a red flag being wildly waved from one of the car windows, and I was just starting to tell the captain that we were about to pass a trainload of revolutionaries when the gust of a mighty cheer swept along the waters to us and set the radio aerials ringing above my head.

"You can't tell me that's a 'Bolshie' yell," observed the American officer decisively. "Nothing but Yanks or Tommies could cough up a roar like that, believe me."

Then I saw that all the canal-ward sides of the dozen or more coaches were wriggling with khaki arms and shoulders (for all the world as though a great two-hundred-yard-long centipede had been pinned up there and left to squirm), and that what I had taken for the red flag of anarchy was only the mass effect of a number of fluttering bandannas. Again and again they cheered the *Hercules* and the White Ensign, with a fresh salvo for the *Viceroy,* which they sighted just before the curve of the loop the train was ascending cut off their view of the canal. That was all we ever heard or saw of them. We were never even sure whether they were British or American. We felt certain, however, that the fact that most of them were still in khaki indicated that their stay in the "Land of Kultur" had not been a long one, and, moreover, that they were already on the first leg of their journey home.

Prisoners working on the land—mostly Russian—were more and more in evidence as we neared the Kiel end of the canal. The majority of them still wore their army uniforms, but otherwise there was little to differentiate them—a short

distance away at least—from the native peasant labour. None of them appeared to be under guard, and in many places they were working side by side with German farm hands of both sexes. At a number of points I saw Russians lounging indolently in groups consisting mostly of Germans (several of which included women) that had gathered along the banks of the canal to watch us pass, and two or three times I observed unmistakable Russian prisoners (or perhaps ex-prisoners) walking arm-in-arm and apparently in animated conversation with German girls. They seem quite to have taken root in the country. Indeed, the pilot of the *Viceroy* for the first half of the passage through the canal—he was a Schleswig man, strongly Danish in appearance and probably in sympathies—assured me that the Germans had had the greatest difficulty in getting Russian prisoners to leave the country at all, and that there had been frequent "desertions" from trains and boats whenever it had been attempted. This may well have been true, though—with labour in Germany as much in demand as it was throughout the war—I doubt very much if a great deal in the way of repatriation of Russians had ever been attempted.

With the towns and villages increasing in size and number as we came to the fertile rolling coun-

KIEL DOCKYARD FROM THE HARBOR

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

try toward the Baltic end of the canal, evidences multiplied that the population expected our coming and that, directly or indirectly, they had been instructed to adopt a "conciliatory" bearing. In the farming region toward the North Sea end their bearing had been more suggestive of indifference than anything else; but in the crowds that came down to line the railed "promenades" along the banks an ingratiating attitude was at once apparent. Some of these people, of course, were of Danish extraction and probably sincere, especially a number who waved their hands from well inside their doorways, as though to avoid being observed by their neighbours; but for the most part it was the same nauseating exhibition we had already seen repeated so often at railway stations all over the North Sea littoral.

The only individual we saw in the whole passage who thoroughly convinced me of his sincerity was a bloated ruffian who hailed us from the stern of the barge he had edged into a ferry slip to give us room to pass. "Go back to England, you English swine!" he roared to the accompaniment of a lewd gesture. We learned later that he gave both the *Hercules* and *Verdun* the same peremptory orders. Yes, he was quite sincere, that old bargee, and for that reason I have always thought more kindly of him than of all the rest

of his grimacing brethren and sistern we saw along the canal that day. A spectacled student (though it is quite possible he was trying to put the same sentiment in politer language) was rather less convincing. "English gentlemen," he cried, drawing his loose-jointed frame up to its full height and glaring at the bridge of the *Viceroy* from under his peaked cap, "why do you come here?" That may have been intended for a protest, or, again, he may merely have been "swanking" his linguistic accomplishments.

The bluejackets were splendid. There were places—notably at several industrial establishments where crowds of rather "on-coming" girls in trousers exerted their blonde witcheries to the full in endeavours to "start something"—when the least sign of friendliness from the ship would have undoubtedly been met with loud acclaim. But not a British hand did I see lifted in response to the hundreds waved from the banks, while many a simpering grin died out as the moon-face behind it passed under the steady stare of the imperturbable *matelots* lining the rails of the steadily steaming warships.

The length of the Kiel Canal is just under a hundred kilometres (about sixty miles), so that —at the speed of ten kilometres an hour to which we were limited—the passage required about ten

hours, exclusive of the time spent in locking in and out. At it was an hour after dawn when we began the passage at Brunsbüttel, the short winter day was not long enough to make it possible to reach the other end in daylight. By five o'clock darkness had begun to settle over the waters, and the grey mists, piling ever thicker in the narrow notch between the hills, deepened through violet to purple before taking on the black opacity of the curtain of the night. Then the lights came on—parallel rows of incandescents narrowing to mist-softened wedges of blurred brightness ahead and astern—and we continued cleaving our easy effortless way through the ebony water.

The blank squares of lighted villa windows heralded the approach to Kiel; then factories, black, still, and stagnant, with the tracery of overhead cranes and the bulk of tall chimneys showing dimly through the mists; then the locks. As the difference between the canal level and the almost tideless Baltic is only a matter of inches, locking-out was even a more expeditious operation than locking in from the Elbe at the other end. There was just time to note that the "*Kaiser Wilhelm*" mosaic, there as at Brunsbüttel, had been scrubbed up bright and clean, when the gates ahead folded inward and the way into the Baltic was open. Half an hour later, after steaming

slowly across a harbour past many moored warships, we were tying up alongside the *Hercules,* where she had come to anchor a mile off Kiel dockyard.

. . . . . .

The fog lifted during the night, and for an hour or two the following morning there were even signs that our long-lost friend, the sun, was struggling to show his face through the sinister shoals of cumulo-nimbus banked frowningly across the south-eastern heavens. It was evident dirty weather was brewing, but for the moment Kiel and its harbour were revealed in all their loveliness. Completely land-locked from the open Baltic, the beautiful little fiord disclosed a different prospect in whichever direction one turned his eyes. The famous *Kaiserliche* Yacht Club was close at hand over the port quarter of the *Hercules,* with a villa-bordered strand opening away to the right. The airy filagree of lofty cranes revealed the location of what had been Europe's greatest naval dockyard, while masses of red roofs disclosed the heart of Kiel itself. Heavily wooded hills, still green, rippled along the skyline on the opposite side of the fiord, with snug little bays running back into them at frequent intervals as they billowed away toward the Baltic entrance. Singularly attractive even in winter, it must have been

a veritable yachtsman's paradise in summer. Recalling the marshes and bogs of the Jade, I marvelled at the restraint of the German naval officer whom I had heard say that he and his wife "much *preferred* Kiel to Wilhelmshaven."

The warships in the harbour proved far less impressive by daylight than at night. Looming up through the mists in the darkness, they had suggested the presence of a formidable fleet. Now they appeared as obsolete hulks, from several of which even the guns had been removed. There was not a modern capital ship left in Kiel; in fact, the only warship of any class which could fairly lay claim to that designation was the *Regensburg,* which had managed to push her broken nose through the canal and was now lying inshore of us, apparently alongside some sort of quay or dock. The most interesting naval craft (if such a term could be applied to it) in sight was a floating submarine dock, anchored a cable's length on the port beam of the *Hercules,* but even that—as was proved on inspection—was far from being the latest thing of its kind.

The British ships were the object of a good deal of interest, especially during the first few hours of the day while the fog held off. Various and sundry small craft put off with parties to size us up at close range, amongst these—significant

commentary on the fact that at every one of the conferences, including the one held that very day, the Germans had advanced "petrol shortage" as the reason why cars could not be provided to reach this or that station—being a number of motor launches. As all of these seemed to be in the hands of white-banded sailors or dockyard "mateys," the inference might have been drawn that the petrol used was not under the control of the naval authorities; but so many of the other "reasons," advanced to discourage, if not to obstruct, inspections which the Germans, for one reason or another, did not want to have made turned out to be fictitious, that one was tempted to believe that "the absolute lack of petrol" was on all fours with them.

Most of these excursion parties kept at a respectful distance, but there was one launch-load of men and girls from the docks, which persisted in circling close to the ships, and even in coming up under the stern of the *Hercules,* and offering to exchange cap ribbons. The two-word reply of one of the bluejackets to these overtures would hardly do to print, but its effect was crushing. Nothing but poor steering prevented that launch from taking the shortest course back to the dockyard landing.

The German Naval Armistice Commission

FORESHORE OF KIEL HARBOR WITH THE KAISERLICH YACHT CLUB AT LEFT OF GROVE OF TREES

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

which came off to the *Hercules* at Kiel to discuss arrangements for inspection in the Baltic differed from that at Wilhelmshaven only in a few of the subordinate members. Rear-Admiral Goette continued to preside, with the tall, blonde Von Müller, of the first *Emden,* and the shifty, pasty-faced Hinzmann, of the General Staff at Berlin, as his chief advisers. Commander Lohmann still presided over the German sub-commission for shipping, but there was a new officer in charge of "air" arrangements. This latter individual, who proved to be one of the most "Hunnish" Huns we encountered anywhere, I shall have something to say of in the next chapter.

That the German Commission had been "stiffened" under the influence of new forces in Kiel was evident from the opening of the conference; in fact, a good part of this opening Baltic sitting was devoted to reducing them to the same state of "sweet reasonableness" in which they had risen from the closing sitting at Wilhelmshaven. One of the most astonishing of their contentions arose in connection with three unsurrendered U-boats, which had been discovered in the course of warship inspection at Wilhelmshaven. Asked when these might be expected ready to proceed to Harwich, Admiral Goette replied that his Government did not consider themselves under obli-

gation to deliver the boats at all. The justification advanced for this remarkable stand constituted one of the most delightful instances of characteristic Hun reasoning that developed in the course of the visit. This was the gist of it: "We agreed to deliver all U-boats in condition to proceed to sea in the first fourteen days of the armistice," contended the Germans; "but—although we don't deny that they *should* have been delivered in that period—the fact that they *were not* so delivered releases us from our obligation to deliver them now. As evidence of our good faith, however, we propose that the vessels in question be disarmed and remain in German ports."

The Germans had so thoroughly convinced themselves that this fantastic interpretation would be accepted by the Allied Commission that Admiral Goette did not consider himself able to concede Admiral Browning's demand (that the three submarines should be surrendered at once) without referring the matter back to Berlin. Definite settlement, indeed, was not arrived at until the final conference nearly a week later, and in that time news had been brought of several score U-boats completed, or nearing completion, in the yards of the Elbe and the Weser.

There was no phase of the Allied Commission's activities which some endeavour was not made

to obstruct or circumscribe in the course of this opening session at Kiel. The German sub-commission for shipping reported that their Government did not feel called upon to grant the claim of the Allies for the return of vessels seized as prizes; the inability to arrange for special trains and the lack of petrol would make it impossible to reach certain air stations by land, while, so far as the experiment station at Warnemünde was concerned, the armistice did not give the Allies the right to visit it at all; as for the Great Belt forts, they were already disarmed, and really not worth the trouble of inspecting anyway.

And so it went through some hours, the upshot of it being that the Germans, as at Wilhelmshaven, "vowing they would ne'er consent, consented." Merchant ship inspection began that afternoon, continuing throughout the remainder of the stay at Kiel as one steamer after another came in from this or that Baltic port and dropped anchor. The following day search of the numerous old warships was started, and the day after that word came that the way had even been cleared for the inspection of the great experimental seaplane station at Warnemünde. For the first time there was promise that the work of the Commission would be completed within the period of the original armistice.

# IX

## TO WARNEMÜNDE AND RÜGEN

THERE had been a half-mile or more of visibility when we got under weigh at eight o'clock, but in the mouth of Kiel Fiord a solid wall of fog was encountered, behind the impenetrable pall of which all objects more than a few yards ahead were completely cut off. The mist-muffled wails of horns and whistles coughed eerily in the depths of the blank smother to port and starboard, and once the beating of a bucket or saucepan heralded the spectre of a "bluff lee-boarded fishing lugger" as the bare steerage way imparted by its flapping yellow mainsail carried it clear of the *Viceroy's* sharp stem.

Three or four more units of that same fatalistic fishing fleet had been missed by equally narrow margins when, looming high above us as they sharpened out of the fog, appeared the bulging bows of what looked to be a large merchantman. At the same instant, too late by many seconds to be of any use as a warning, the snort of a deep-toned whistle ripped out in response to the querulous shriek of our own syren.

When two ships, steaming on opposite courses at something like ten knots, meet in a fog the usual result is a collision, and nothing but the quick-wittedness of the captain of the *Viceroy* prevented one on this occasion. The stranger, in starboarding his helm, bared a long expanse of rusty paunch for the nose of the destroyer to bury itself in, as a sword-fish stabs a whale, and that is what must inevitably have happened—with disastrous consequences to both vessels in all probability—had the *Viceroy* also attempted to avoid collision by turning to port. Realizing this with a sure judgment, the captain fell back on an alternative which would hardly have been open to him with a destroyer less powerfully built and engined than the latest "V's." I have already told how, in the lock at Brunsbüttel, he had stopped his ship dead, just short of the gates, by going astern with the engines at the proper moment. Here, in scarcely more time than it takes to tell it, he not only stopped her dead but had her backing (at constantly accelerating speed) away from the slowly turning merchantman. The jar (followed by a prolonged throbbing) was almost as sharp as when the air-brakes are set on the wheels of a speeding express, and the outraged wake of her, like the back of a cat whose fur has been rubbed the wrong way, arched in a

tumbling fountain high above her quivering stern. But back she went, and so gave the burly freighter room to blunder by in.

There was just time to note her high bulwarks, two or three suspicious-looking superstructures (which one's passing acquaintance with "Q" boats suggested as possibly masking guns), and a folded seaplane housed on the poop, before the menacing apparition thinned and melted into the fog as suddenly as it had appeared.

"I think that ship is the *Wolf*," volunteered the pilot, watching with side-cast eyes the effects of the announcement. "You will perhaps remember it as the great raider of the Indian Ocean."

The captain looked up quickly from the chart as though about to say something; then thought better of it, and, with a wistful smile, turned back to his study of the channel. I had seen him smile resignedly like that a few days previously off the Elbe estuary when a speeding widgeon, whose line of flight had promised to carry it right over the forecastle, had sheered off without giving him a shot. What he had said on that occasion was, "Hang the blighter; another chance missed!"

Going aft to breakfast, I was hailed by Korvettenkapitän M—— (the officer commanding all Baltic air stations who was accompanying us to Warnemünde and Rügen), warming himself at

the engine-room hatchway, and informed that the ship just sighted was "the famous raider, *Moewe*, that has been so many times through the English blockade." It was he that was correct, as it turned out. We found the *Moewe* anchored three or four cables' lengths on the port bow of the *Hercules* when we returned to Kiel the following evening.

They were two thoroughly typical specimens of their kind, the pilot and the flight commander, so much so that either would have been pounced on with delight by a cartoonist looking for a model for a figure of "Hun Brutality." The former claimed to have served most of the war in U-boats, and from the fact that he was only a "one-striper," one reckoned that he was a promoted rating of some kind. He was tall, dark, and powerful of build, with hard black eyes glowering from under bushy brows. He talked of his submarine exploits with the greatest gusto, among these being (according to his claim) the launching of the torpedo which damaged the *Sussex*. It is possible that he was quite as useful a U-boat officer as he said he was (for he looked fully capable of doing a number of the things one had heard of U-boat officers doing); but he turned out, as the sequel proved, only an indifferent pilot.

The flight officer is easiest described by saying

that he was like what one would imagine Hindenburg to have been at thirty-five or thereabouts. The resemblance to the great Field-Marshal was physical only, for the anti-type, far from having the "bluff, blunt fighter" air of the former, was a subtle intriguer of the highest order. Just how "subtle" he was may be judged from the fact that within ten minutes of coming aboard that morning he had drawn one of the British officers aside to warn him of the menace to England in Wilson's "fourteen points," and that, a quarter of an hour after the snub this kindly advice won him, he had cornered one of the American officers to bid him beware of the inevitable attack his country must very soon expect from England and Japan.

A half-hour more "by luck and lead" took us out of the fog, and an almost normal visibility made it possible for the *Viceroy* to increase to her "economic" cruising speed of seventeen knots. The red roofs of the summer hotels along Warnemünde's waterfront began pushing above the horizon a little after noon, and by one we were heading in to where the mouth of a broad canal opened up behind a long stone breakwater. A large ferry steamer, flying the Danish flag, was just rounding the end of the breakwater and turning off to the north-west, and from the word

"HINDY" (LEFT) AND GERMAN PILOT WHO CLAIMED TO HAVE LAUNCHED THE TORPEDO WHICH DAMAGED THE "SUSSEX"

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

"ARMISTICE" painted on her sides in huge white letters we took it she was engaged in repatriating Allied prisoners by way of Copenhagen. As we closed her, this impression was confirmed by the sight of two men in the unmistakable uniforms of British officers pacing the after-deck arm-in-arm. Surprised that they appeared to be taking no notice of the *Viceroy,* with the White Ensign at her stern doing its best to flap them a message of encouragement, I raised my glass and scanned them closely. Then the dark glasses both were wearing, and their slow uncertain steps, at once suggested the sad explanation of their indifference. There was no doubt the sight of both was seriously affected, and that they were probably hardly able more than to feel their way around. As nothing less than "Rule Britannia" or "God Save the King" on the syren would have given them any hint of how things stood, we had to pass on unrecognized.

Running a quarter of a mile up the canal, the *Viceroy* went alongside the wall a hundred yards above the railway station. The news of our arrival had spread quickly in the town, and among a considerable crowd which assembled along the waterfront were a number of British prisoners, most of them in their khaki. Several German sailors—one or two of them with white bands on

their arms—to whom the Tommies had been talking, kept discreetly in the background, but the latter, grinning with delight and exchanging good-natured chaff with the bluejackets, caught our mooring lines and helped make them fast. They looked in extremely good condition and spirits, the consequence—as we learned presently—of having had a considerable accumulation of prisoners' stores turned over to them since the armistice. Beer, they said, was the only thing they were short of, and this difficulty they seemed in a fair way to remedy when I left with the "air" party for the seaplane station.

The great Warnemünde experiment station occupied the grounds of what appeared to have been some kind of a pre-war industrial or agricultural exposition. Crossing the canal in a launch, a few steps took us to and through a somewhat pretentious entrance arch, from where it was several hundred yards to the first of a long row of wood and steel hangars. The Commander of the station had received us at the landing; the rest of the officers met us in the roadway in front of the first shed to be inspected. Evidences of the resentment they undoubtedly felt over having to give way in the matter of the visit (it had been the German contention that Warnemünde, not being a service station, was not liable to inspection

under the terms of the armistice) were not lacking, but as these were mostly confined to scowling glances they did not interfere seriously with the work in hand.

As the Allied Commission, in the conference of a couple of days previously at Kiel, had insisted on the visit to Warnemünde on the grounds of satisfying itself that what the Germans claimed was an experiment station was not used for service work, inspection was limited to the comparatively perfunctory checking over of the machines against a list furnished in advance, seeing that they displayed no evidences of having been used for anything more than experimental flights, and ascertaining that they had been properly disarmed. This, as soon as it became evident that the station was in fact quite what the Germans had claimed it to be, was done very rapidly, the inspection of well over a hundred machines, housed in eight or ten different sheds, being completed within three hours.

The machines were, of course, an extremely interesting assortment, for practically all of them were either new designs or else old ones in process of development. There was the last word in steel pontoons, with which the Germans have been so successful, and also a number of the very striking all-metal *Junker* machines, in the con-

struction of which wood, and even fabric, has been replaced by the light but tough alloy called "duraluminum." One of the German officers volunteered the information that the principal advantage of the latter over the ordinary machine was the fact that more of it could be salved after a crash. The fact that there was nothing to burn sometimes rendered it possible to save an injured pilot entangled in the wreckage, where the wood and fabric of an ordinary machine would have made him a funeral pyre. Against these advantages, he added, stood the handicap of greater weight and the fact that the metal wings occasionally deflected into the pilot or petrol tank a bullet which would have passed harmlessly through wood and fabric.

There were several of the late *Travemunde* and *Sablatnig* types, medium-sized machines which, with their powerful engines and trim lines, looked extremely useful. A large double-engined Gotha torpedo-launching seaplane was viewed with a good deal of interest by the experts of the party, because it was a type to the development of which it had been expected that the Germans had given a great deal of attention. Down to the very day of the armistice the Grand Fleet—whether at Rosyth or Scapa—was never considered entirely free from the menace of an attack by a flotilla of

torpedo-carrying seaplanes, and it was a matter of considerable surprise to the sub-commission for naval air stations when it transpired in the course of their visits to the German North Sea and Baltic bases to find a practically negligible strength in these types. The almost prohibitive odds against getting a seaplane carrier within striking distance of either of the Grand Fleet bases—handicap imposed by the complete surface command of the North Sea by the British—was undoubtedly responsible for Germany's failure to develop a type of machine which there was little chance of finding an occasion to use. Even this one at Warnemünde—representing as it did the latest development of its type—was far from being equal to machines with which the British were practising torpedo-launching a year before the end of the war.

The most imposing exhibit at Warnemünde was a "giant" seaplane rivalling in size the great monoplane flying boat we had seen at Norderney. The two were so different in type that it was difficult to compare them, though it is probable that in engine power—both of them had four engines of from 250 to 300 horse-power each—and in wing area they were about equal. The Warnemünde machine—which was a biplane, with two pontoons instead of a "boat"—had a some-

what greater spread of wing, but this must have been compensated for by the vastly greater breadth of those of the monoplane. Superior seaworthiness had been claimed for the latter on account of the greater height of its wings from the water when afloat; but that was *ex parte* evidence, and we had no chance to hear what Warnemünde had to say in favour of *its* pet.

An incident which occurred in connection with the inspection of the "giant" furnished a very graphic idea of the really colossal size of it. In order to get over it the more quickly, all of the several members of the Allied party climbed up and took a hand in the work. Whether the German officers thought some of the gear might be carried off by the visitors, whether they were afraid the secrets of some of their technical instruments might be discovered, or whether they were simply "doing the honours of the occasion," we were never quite sure. At any rate, up swarmed at least a dozen of them, scrambling like a crowd at a ticket turnstile to get inside. In a jiffy they had disappeared, swallowed completely by the capacious fuselage. Not even a head was in sight. Only the clatter of many tongues and the clang of boots tramping on steel plates told that close to a score of men were jostling each other in the cavernous maw of the mighty "amphibian."

Only the Commander of the station—a somewhat porcine-looking individual, whose rotund figure furnished ample explanation why *he* had not joined the scramble—and myself were left on *terra firma*. Plainly disturbed by the thought that Germany's supreme achievement in aerial science was passing under the eye of the enemy, he paced up and down moodily for a minute or two and then, with clearing brow, came over and asked me what was the horse-power of the largest "Inglisch Zeeblane."

"I really can't tell you," I replied, half angry, half amused at the supreme cheek of the man.

"Ach, but vy will you not tell me?" he urged wheedlingly. "Der war iss over; ve vill now have no more zeecrets. Today you see all ve haf. Preddy soon ve come und see all you haf. There iss much ve can learn from you, und much you can learn from us. Ve vill haf no more zeecrets."

There were several things that I wanted to say to that Hun optimist, and it required no little restraint to pass them over and confine myself to suggesting that he should take up the matter of the exchange of "zeecrets" with Commander C——, the Senior Officer of the party. He looked at the latter (who was just descending) irresolutely once or twice, and then, doubtless seeing nothing encouraging in the set of Commander

C——'s lean Yankee jaw, shrugged his fat shoulders and resumed his moody pacings. We encountered a number of eager "searchers for knowledge" in the course of the visit, but no other that I heard of who employed quite such a "Prussian mass tactics" style of attack as this one.

Going from shed to shed as the inspection progressed, one noticed at once the much greater extent to which wood had figured in their construction than in that of those of the North Sea stations. Only the frames were of steel, and even the fireproof asbestos sheeting which figured so extensively in the great Zeppelin sheds had been very sparingly employed. As this also proved to be the practice in the two large stations we visited the next day on the island of Rügen, it was assumed that the comparative cheapness of wood in the Baltic had been responsible for the freedom with which it had been employed to save steel and concrete. The inevitable penalty of this inflammable construction had been paid at Warnemünde, where the tangled masses of wreckage in the ruins of a burned hangar indicated that all the machines it had contained were destroyed with the building.

When we returned to the *Viceroy* after the inspection was over, we found a number of British

prisoners aboard as the guests of the bluejackets. Several of them had asked for "rashers, or anything greasy," but for tobacco and "home comforts" they appeared to be rather better off than their hosts. The captain said that he had offered passages back to the *Hercules* to any that cared to go, but they had all declined with thanks, saying that they were helping to distribute food for other prisoners passing through Warnemünde on their way home *viâ* Denmark, and that they would not return home until this work was finished. We left them without any misgivings save, perhaps, on the score that they seemed rather too tolerant of the presence among them of a number of white-banded German sailors.

During our absence the German harbour master had come aboard to warn the captain that, as it was *verboten* to use the turning basin after five o'clock, it would be necessary for him to proceed there before that hour. When the captain thanked him and replied that he hoped to be able to carry on without resorting to the turning basin, the astonished official warned him that it was highly dangerous to go out backwards, that even the German T.B.D.'s never thought of doing so mad a thing. The sight of the *Viceroy* going astern at a good ten or twelve knots straight down the middle of that half a mile or more of canal must have been

something of an eye-opener to that *Kaiserliche* harbour master.

Passing close to the railway station on the way out we had a brief glimpse of the sorry spectacle of a huge mass of Russian prisoners, who appeared to have been dumped there from one train to wait for another, going heaven knows where. A thousand or more in number, they had overflowed the narrow strip of platform under the train-shed, and as we passed some hundreds of them, huddling together like sheep for warmth and with no protection save the square of red blankets thrown over their hunched shoulders, were soaking up the rain which came drizzling down through the early winter twilight.

"Russian prisoners that we now send back to their homes," explained Korvettenkapitän M—— as I passed his perch in the hot-air stream from the engine-room hatchway. "They do not like to leave Germany, but we have not now the food for them."

"Out of the frying-pan into the fire," commented the chief. "A return to Russia is the one thing left worse than what they've been through here. Poor devils—but listen to that! Talk about your bird singing in the rain——"

Deep, reverberant, pulsing like the throb of a mighty organ, the strains of what might have been

either a hymn or a marching song were wafted to our ears on the wings of the deepening dusk. For two or three minutes the strangely moving sound, rising and falling like the roll of a surf on a distant shore, followed us down the canal before it was quenched in the roar of the accelerating fans as the bridge rang down for increased speed. The German was the first to break the silence in which we had listened.

"The Russians are a strange people," he said, with a note of sincerity in his voice I had never remarked before. "There is always sadness in their happiness, and always hope in their despair. I think they can never be broken."

For the first and last time I was inclined to agree with him.

A three-hour run at a speed of fifteen knots brought us to the island of Rügen, where we anchored in shallow water three or four miles off the station of Büg, which we were scheduled to inspect in the morning. It was only a fair-weather anchorage, however, and the lee shore, together with a falling barometer and a rising wind, caused the pilot to advise running round to the somewhat better protection of Tromper Bay, on the opposite side of the island. This shift, which there was no real necessity for making, involved an alteration of plan, for the shores of Tromper

Bay (where we now had to attempt a landing) were four or five miles from Wiek, the second station to be inspected, and entirely cut off from communication with Büg by a long lagoon. Under the circumstances, the only practicable plan seemed to be to walk to Wiek across the island, go from there to Büg by launch, and then endeavour to rejoin the destroyer at her first anchorage of the night before, to which she would return in the interim. This intricate itinerary we finally succeeded in following, but it almost killed poor "Hindenburg," the fat German flying officer escorting the party, who had confidently counted on doing all of his travelling by launch.

The motor launch refusing to start in the morning, the whaler was used to land the inspection party. As there appeared to be nothing in the way of a quay or landing-stage, the most likely place to get ashore seemed to be a dismantled pier, the piles of which were visible from the deck of the destroyer. "Hindy" (the name had already begun to stick to him), however, promptly appointing himself as pilot, in spite of the fact that he knew no more of that particular stretch of coast than any one else in the party, ruled in favour of landing directly upon the beach. Pulling straight in on the course he indicated, the heavily laden whaler grounded a couple of hundred yards from

BRITISH PRISONERS AND GERMAN SAILORS AT WARNEMÜNDE

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

the shore, and was only worried off by all hands going aft and raising the stranded bow. Commander C—— took over the direction of affairs at this juncture, and the incidence of events was such that "Hindy" did not essay the leadership *rôle* again for some hours, and even then but transiently.

The old pier, to the end of which the whaler was now pulled, had evidently been wrecked in a storm of many years before and never repaired. Its planking was gone entirely, but two strings of timbers running along the tops of the tottering piles offered a possible, though precarious, means of reaching the two-hundred-yard-distant beach. When two of the American officers clambered up, however, they found the timbers so slippery with moss that it was a sheer physical impossibility to stand erect and walk along them. The only alternative was to sit astride one of them and slither along shoreward, a few inches at a time. This they did, pushing along a thick roll of filthy slime in front of them as they went, and stopping every now and then to disengage the end of a projecting spike that was holding their trousers. Following behind one of them, I found the progress both vile and painful, even after his wiggle-waggle advance had swabbed up the worst of the slime and uncovered the longest of the spikes lurking to am-

bush the seat of my trousers. It must have been unspeakable for the two self-sacrificing pioneers.

Halfway in, the timbers, less exposed to the splashing spray, offered a better footing, and from there, following the lead of Commander C——, we managed to stand up and walk. Not until we reached the end and jumped off on to the firm sand and began to count noses before striking off inland did any one notice that "Hindy" was missing. The account of that worthy's doings in the meantime I had that evening after our return to the *Viceroy* from the coxswain of the whaler.

For the first time "Hindy" had neglected to insist on the precedence due to his rank as a "three-striper" and push out in the lead at a landing. On the contrary, it appears, he had lingered in the stern sheets of the whaler until the last of the Allied officers had slid along out of hearing, and then coolly ordered two of the crew to wade ashore carrying him between them. He would show them, he said, how the German sailors joined hands to make a chair for their officers on such an occasion. Failing in this manœuvre, he had suggested that two of the oars be lashed together with the strip of bunting in the stern sheets and laid along across the tops of the piles to give him a firm footing. Two of the bluejackets, he explained, could go with him and "relay" this im-

provised gangway along ahead. It was only when the coxswain, in English probably too idiomatic to convey its full meaning to a German, expressed his lack of sympathy with this ingenious proposal that he screwed up his nerve to tackling the "wiggle-waggle" mode of progression.

Given a leg up by the whaler's crew, he wriggled astride the nearest longitudinal strip of timber and began his snail-like, shoreward crawl. At the end of a quarter of an hour he had barely reached the less slippery timbering halfway in, but here, instead of getting up on his hind legs, as the rest of us had done, and ambling along on his feet, the shivering wretch still persisted in embracing the slimy beam with his fat thighs and continuing to worry on "wiggle-waggle."

Finally Commander C——, whose eyes for the last fifteen minutes had been turning back and forth between the ludicrously swaying figure on the pier and the hands of his watch, uttered an impatient exclamation and squared his shoulders with the air of a man who has come to a great decision.

"We're already two hours behind time," he said, buttoning his waterproof and pulling on his gloves, "and it's touch and go whether we can finish in time to return tonight to Kiel per schedule. It's a cert we won't make it if we have

to wait any longer for our tortoise-shaped and tortoise-gaited friend out there. There's a disagreeable duty to be performed, and since it is not of a nature that I can conscientiously order one of my subordinate officers to do, I guess it's up to me to pull it off myself. Kindly note that I'm wearing gloves."

Vaulting lightly from the sand to a line of timbering running parallel, at a distance of about five feet, to the one upon which "Hindy" was slithering along, he trotted out opposite the latter, reached across, lifted that protesting bundle of anatomy to his feet, and then, leading him by the hand, started back for the beach. The German followed like Mary's Little Lamb as long as he had the dynamic pressure of the American's fingers to give him courage, but when Commander C—— withdrew his guiding hand after he had led his fellow tight-rope walker in above the sand, "Hindy's" nerve went with it. Trying to sludder down astride the timber again after tottering drunkenly for a moment, he lost his balance and tried to jump. The drop was not over five feet, and to soft sand at that; but the remains of a riveter I once saw fall to the pavement of Broadway from the fortieth story of the new Singer building looked less inert than the shivering pancake that fat Prussian made when he hit the

beach of Rügen. There was really very little to choose between it and a flatulent jelly-fish slowly dissolving in the embrace of a mass of stranded seaweed a few yards away; indeed, the subtle suggestion of that comparison may have had something to do with the reflex action behind a kick I saw some one aim at the jelly-fish in passing.

That was the last we saw of "Hindy" (except as a wavering blur on the rearward horizon) for nearly two hours.

Striking inland through the dunes and a plantation of young pine trees, we emerged at a cross-road where a signboard conveyed the information that Wiek (our immediate objective) was six and four-tenths kilometres distant. "If we can hike that four miles inside of an hour there's a fair chance of cleaning up the whole job today," said Commander C——, striking out along the lightly metalled highway with a swinging stride. "'Hindy' will have to get along as best he can. We won't need him for the inspection anyhow."

Passing several rather dismal summer hotels (one of which was called the "Strand Palace"), we came to a picturesque little village of brick and thatch houses, with brightly curtained windows, and standing in well-kept flower gardens. The villagers evidently a half-agricultural, half-fisher folk—could have had no warning of our

coming, as even the station at Wiek was expecting us from the opposite direction, and by launch. Quite uninstructed in the matter of adopting "conciliatory" tactics (as those of so many of the places previously visited had so plainly been), they simply went their own easy way, displaying neither fear, resentment, nor even a great amount of curiosity. Most of the shops, except those of the butchers, were fairly well stocked, the displays of Christmas toys (among which were some very ingeniously constructed "working" Zeppelins) being really attractive.

Beyond the village the Wiek road, which turned off at right angles from the main highway, became no more than a muddy track. Deeply rutted and slippery with the last of the snow which had drifted into it from a recent storm, walking in it became so laborious that we finally took to the fields, across the light sandy loam of which we just managed to maintain the four-miles-an-hour stride necessary to keep from falling behind schedule. The several peasants encountered (mostly women with baskets of beets or cabbages on their backs) regarded us with stolid impersonal disinterest, and seemed hardly equal to the mental effort of figuring out where the motley array of uniforms came from.

A tall spire gave us the bearing for Wiek, and

we passed close by the ancient stone church which it surmounted in skirting the village on a short-cut to the air station. This took us to the rear entrance of the latter (instead of the main one where we were naturally expected to come) and had the interesting sequel of bringing us face to face with a sentry wearing a red band on his sleeve, the first of that particular brand of revolutionist we had encountered. Although failing to stand at attention as we approached, he was otherwise quite respectful in his demeanour and made haste to dispatch a messenger informing the Commander of the station of our arrival. A number of other "red-banders" were seen in passing through the barracks area on the way to the sheds, one of them even going so far as to click heels and salute.

In spite of the flutter of red at the rear, there was no evidence of anything Bolshevik in the display set out for us in the shop-window. The men lounging about the sheds fell in at once on the order of the Commander, paraded smartly, and when dismissed showed no disposition to hang about the doors, as had occasionally been the case at other stations. They apparently had not even insisted on one of their representatives being present during the inspection. None but the five or six officers receiving the party conducted it

around. These were all keen-eyed, quick-moving youngsters, but the fact that they were comparatively sparsely decorated seemed to indicate that the station was not of an importance to command the services of the "star turn" men we had seen at Norderney, Borkum, and other North Sea bases.

There was one thing which turned up in the course of the inspection which was not upon the list furnished us by the Germans, and that was a large stack of second-hand furniture which I stumbled across in an out-of-the-way corner of the first shed visited. An unmistakable French name on the back of a red plush-upholstered divan first suggested the lot was an imported one, and looking closer I discovered a half-obliterated maker's mark, with the letters "Brux-l-s" following it. Diverting one of the inspecting officers in that direction as opportunity offered, I asked him what he thought the word had been. "Probably the Belgian spelling of Brussels," he replied promptly, "and certainly the English spelling of loot." When the German Commander chanced to mention, a few minutes later, that his flight had only recently come from Zeebrugge, both conjectures seemed to be confirmed.

The inspection was over by the time "Hindy" arrived, and we departed for Büg immediately

he had completed the wash-down and brush-up that his brother officers, who treated him with a good deal of deference, insisted on his having. He was too dead beat to display temper when he had been bundled into the launch, and he impressed me as telling the bare literal truth when he said it was the hardest walk he had ever taken in his life.

A half-hour's run brought the launch alongside the landing-stage at Büg, which ideally located station occupied a quarter of a mile of the narrow spit of sand separating the broad, shallow lagoon we had just crossed from the open Baltic. Concrete runways sloped down to both strands, so that seaplanes could be launched in either direction. It was an admirably planned and equipped station in every respect. An hour's inspection showed that the provisions of the armistice, here as at all of the other stations visited, had been satisfactorily carried out. A novel feature of the visit was the presence of a couple of photographers—evidently official ones, judging from the fine machines they had—who waylaid the party at every corner and exposed a large number of plates.

"Hindy," who had disappeared shortly after we landed, turned up again about the time the inspection of the last hangar was completed, pick-

ing his teeth and considerably restored in aplomb by the hearty *mittagessen* he had regaled himself with at the Commander's mess. Not until then were we informed that the station had no launch or boat of any kind available on the Baltic side. This meant that the *Viceroy*—she had now come to anchor three or four miles off-shore—would have to send a boat in for us, and that an hour's time had been wasted before making a signal for it. Hastily writing a message requesting that the motor launch or whaler be sent in to the landing, Commander C—— handed it to the Commander of the station, suggesting that it be made by "Visual" to the *Viceroy* in International Morse. Here "Hindy," brave with much beer, asserted his authority again. Snatching the paper from the station Commander's hand, he read over the signal with a frown of disapproval, and then handed it back to Commander C——.

"That is much too long and complicated for a German signalman to send in English," he growled. "You should write only, 'Send boat immediately.' That is quite enough."

There was a look in Commander C——'s face like that it had worn when he turned and left "Hindy" in a heap on the beach by the jelly-fish, but he controlled himself and spoke with considerable restraint.

"Since the *Viceroy* is not my private yacht," he said quietly, "any signal I make to her will begin 'Request.' I might add that if I were her captain, and a passenger of mine made me a signal like the one you suggest, he could wait till—till the Baltic froze over before I'd send a boat to take him off. Unless you're prepared to wait that long, you can't do better than see that the signal is made exactly as I have written it."

In spite of its "length and complication," that signal, as we saw it later in the *Viceroy,* was identical with the original to a T.

It was rather hard luck that Büg, which was the first station we visited without carrying our own lunch in the form of sandwiches, was also the only one where we were not offered shelter and refreshment. "Hindy" disappeared again during the next hour of waiting, and even had to be sent for when the whaler finally did arrive. The rest of us were so thoroughly chilled from standing out in the biting Baltic wind that we were only too glad to warm up a bit by "double-banking" the oars with the whaler's crew on the pull back to the destroyer. The sight of American and British officers bending to the sweeps with common blue-jackets created a tremendous furore at the station. The photographers rushed out to the end of the jetty to make a permanent record of the astonish-

ing sight, and from the significant glances all of the Germans were exchanging one gathered that they thought that theirs was not the only Navy in which there had been a revolution.

Climbing up to the bridge shortly after the *Viceroy* got under weigh for the run back to Kiel, I found the captain on watch with a hulking Number 8-bore shot-gun under his arm, at which vicious weapon the German pilot, pressing as far away from it as the restricted space allowed, kept stealing apprehensive sidelong glances with eyes ostensibly searching the horizon through his binoculars. On asking the captain what the artillery was for, he motioned me back beside the range-finder stand, where he presently joined me.

"I'm watching for ducks—great place for them along here," he said in a low voice; "but don't give it away to the Hun. He seems to think it's for *him*. It's old B——'s gun. He shot ducks with it from the bridge of his E-boat all over the Bight during the war."

"You don't mean to say that you'd stop the destroyer and circle back to pick up a duck in case you happepned to wing one?" I asked incredulously.

"Wouldn't I?" he laughed. "Just tumble up if you hear a shot and see. There's no finer duck-

boat in the world than a destroyer if you got the sea room to handle her in."

It was an hour or two later that I was shaken out of a doze on a ward-room divan by a sudden jar, followed by the threshing of reversed screws. "The skipper's got his bird," I thought, and forthwith scrambled out and up the ladder, especially anxious to arrive in time to see the expressions on the face of the Germans when they realized that the "mad Englander" was going back in his warship to pick up a duck. Compared to that it turned out to have been an event of no more than passing interest which had happened. The pilot (perhaps because his mind was absorbed in the menace of that terrible 8-bore) had merely missed—by three or four miles as it transpired presently—the gate of the anti-submarine net fencing off that neck of the Baltic, with the result that the *Viceroy* had barged into that barrage at something like seventeen knots. Cutting through the first of what proved to be a double net, she brought up short against the second, the while her spinning propellers wound in and chewed to bits a considerable length of the former.

The seas were agitated for a half-mile on either side by the straining of the outraged booms, while from the savagely slashing screws floated up a

steady stream of mangled metal floats like *wienerwursts* emerging from a sausage machine. Luckily, the cables of the nets were rusted and brittle, so that the propellers readily tore loose from them without injury. Backing off clear, the pilot ran down the boom until the buoys marking the gate were sighted, and from there it was comparatively open going to Kiel, which we reached at nine-thirty that evening.

# X

## JUTLAND AS A GERMAN SAW IT

It must have been the unspeakable position of humiliation he found himself in as a consequence of being ignored, flouted, and even openly insulted by the men he had once treated as no more worthy of consideration than the deck beneath his feet that was responsible for the fact that the German naval officer with whom the members of the staff of the Allied Naval Armistice Commission were thrown in contact almost invariably assumed an air of injured martyrdom, missing no opportunity to draw attention to, and endeavour to awaken sympathy in, his sad plight. He took advantage of any kind of a pretext to "tell his troubles," and when nothing occurred in the natural course of events to provide an excuse, he invented one. Thus, a Korvettenkapitän in one of the ships searched at Wilhelmshaven took advantage of the fact that a man to whom he gave an order about opening a water-tight door in a bulkhead slouched over and started discussing with the white-banded representative of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council, to speak at some

length of the "terrible situation" with which he had been faced at the time when the High Sea Fleet had been ordered out last November for a decisive naval battle. The filthy condition his ship was in furnished the inspiration for another officer to tell at some length of how he had hung his head with shame since the day he had been baulked of "The Day." An ex-submarine officer —acting as pilot in one of the British destroyers in the Baltic—did not feel that he could leave the ship without setting right some comments on German naval gunnery, which he had found in a London paper left in his cabin.

And so it went. Now and then one of them, after volunteering an account of something in his own naval experience, would counter with some more or less shrewdly interpolated query calculated to draw a "revealing" reply; but for the most part they were content with a passive listener. That fact relieved considerably the embarrassment this action on the part of the Germans placed Allied officers, who were under orders to hold no "unnecessary conversation" in the course of their tours of inspection. A "monologue" could in no way be construed as a "conversation," and when, as was almost invariably the case, it was up on a subject in which the "audience" was deeply interested, it was felt that there

was no contravention of the spirit of the order in listening to it. The statements and comment I am setting down in this article were heard in the course of such "monologues" delivered by this or that German naval officer with whom I was thrown —often for as long as two or three days at stretch —in connection with the journeys and inspection routine of the party to which I chanced to be attached at the moment. In only two or three instances—notably in the case of an officer in the flying service who endeavoured to dissuade us from visiting the Zeppelin station at Tondern by giving a false account of the damage inflicted in the course of the British bombing raid of last summer—did statements made under these circumstances turn out to be deliberate untruths. On the contrary, indeed, much that I first heard in this way I have later been able to confirm from other sources, and to this—statements which there is good reason to believe are quite true—I am endeavouring to confine myself here. In matter of opinions expressed, the German naval officer has, of course, the same right to his own as has anybody else, and, as one of the few things remaining to him at the end of the war that he *did* have a right to, I did not, and shall not, try to dispute them.

Perhaps the one most interesting fact brought out in connection with all I heard in this way—it

is confirmed, directly and indirectly, from so many different sources that I should consider it as definitely established beyond all doubt—was that *at no time from August, 1914, to November, 1918, did the German seriously plan for a stand-up, give-and-take fight to a finish with the British Fleet.* Never, not in the flush of his opening triumphs on land, nor yet even in the desperation of final defeat, did the hottest heads on the General Naval Staff at Berlin believe that there was sufficient chance of a victory in a gunnery duel to make it worth while trying under any conditions whatever. The way a number of officers referred to their final attempt to take the High Sea Fleet to sea after it became apparent that Ludendorff was beaten beyond all hope of recovery in France, gave the impression at first that an "all out" action was contemplated, that all was to be hazarded on a single throw, win or lose. It is probable, even, that the great majority of the officers afloat, and certainly all of the men (for fear of the results of such an action is the reason ascribed by all for the series of mutinies which finally put the navy out of the reckoning as a fighting force) believed this to be the case. But those officers who, either before or after the event, were in a position to know the details of the real plans, were in substantial agreement that it was not intended to bring the High

VIEW OF KIEL CANAL FROM NEARMOST TURRET OF THE "HERCULES"

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Sea Fleet into action with the Grand Fleet, but rather to use it as a bait to expose the latter to a submarine "ambush" on a scale ten times greater than anything of the kind attempted before, and then to lure such ships as survived the U-boat attack into a minefield trap. Should a sufficiently heavy toll have been taken of the capital ships of the Grand Fleet in this way, then—but not until then—would the question of a general fleet action have been seriously considered.

But although the General Naval Staff, and doubtless most of the senior officers of the German navy, realized from the outset that the High Sea Fleet would certainly be hopelessly outmatched in a gunnery battle and that their only chance of victory would have to come through a reduction of the strength of the Grand Fleet in capital ships by mine or torpedo, the greatest efforts were made to prevent any such comprehension of the situation finding its way to the lower decks. The men were constantly assured that their fleet was quite capable of winning a decisive victory at any time that the necessity arose, and there is not doubt that they believed this implicitly—until the day after Jutland. Then they knew the truth, and they never recovered from the effects of it. That was where Jutland marked very much more of an epoch for the Ger-

man navy than it did for the British. The latter, cheated out of a victory which was all but within its grasp, was more eager than ever to renew the fight at the first opportunity. The several very salutary lessons learned at a heavy cost—and not the least of these was a very wholesome respect for German gunnery—were not forgotten. Structural defects were corrected in completed ships and avoided in those building. Technical equipment, which had been found unequal to the occasion, was replaced. New systems were evolved where the old had proved wanting. Great as was the Grand Fleet increase in size from Jutland down to the end of the war, its increase of efficiency was even greater.

With the High Sea Fleet, though several notable units were added to its strength during the last two years of the war, in every other respect it deteriorated steadily from Jutland right down to the mutinies which were the forerunners of the great surrender. This was due, far more than to anything else, to the fact that the real hopelessness of opposing the Grand Fleet in a give-and-take fight began to sink home to the Germans from the moment the first opening salvoes of the latter smothered the helpless and disorganized units of the High Sea Fleet in that last half-hour before the shifting North Sea mists and the deepening

twilight saved them from the annihilation they had invited in trying to destroy Beatty's battle-cruisers before Jellicoe arrived. What the most of their higher officers had always known, the men knew from that day on, and, cowed by that knowledge, were never willing to go into battle again. From what I gathered from a number of sources I have no hesitation in affirming that, up to Jutland, the men of the High Sea Fleet would have taken it out in the full knowledge that it was to meet the massed naval might of Britain, and, moreover, that they would have gone into action confidently and bravely, just as they did at Jutland. But it is equally clear that, after Jutland, any move which the men themselves knew was likely to bring them into action with the British battle fleet would instantly have precipitated the same kind of revolt as that which started at Kiel last November and culminated in the surrender. It was the increasing "jumpiness" of the men, causing them to suspect that every sally out of harbour might be preliminary to the action which they had been living in increasing dread of every day and night for the preceding two years and a half, which finally made it practically impossible for the Germans to get out into the Bight sufficient forces to protect even their mine-sweeping craft. As a consequence, it is by no means unlikely that the continuation of

the war for another few months might well have found the German navy, U-boats and all, effectually immobilized in harbour behind ever-widening barriers of mines.

By long odds the most reasoned and illuminative discussion I heard of German naval policy, from first to last, was that of an officer who was Gunnery Lieutenant of the *Deutschland* at Jutland, and whom I met through his having had charge of the arrangements of the visits of the airship party of the Allied Naval Commission to the various Zeppelin stations in the North Sea littoral. Of a prominent militarist family—he claimed that his father was a director of Krupps—and a great admirer of the Kaiser (whom I once heard him refer to as an "idealist who did all that he could to prevent the war"), he was extremely well informed on naval matters, both those of his own country and—so far as German information went—the Allies. Harbouring a very natural bitterness against the revolution, and especially against the mutinous sailors of the navy, he spoke the more freely because he felt that he had no future to look forward to in Germany, which (as he told me on a number of occasions) he intended to leave as soon as the way was open for him to go to South America or the Far East. Also, where he confined himself to statements of fact rather than

opinion or conjecture, he spoke truly. I have yet to find an instance in which he made an intentional endeavour to create a false impression.

It was in the course of our lengthy and somewhat tedious railway journey to the Zeppelin station at Nordholz that Korvettenkapitän C—— first alluded to his life in the High Sea Fleet. "I was the gunnery officer of the *Deutschland* during the first two years of the war," he volunteered as he joined me at the window of the corridor of our special car, from which I was trying to catch a glimpse of the suburban area of stagnant Bremerhaven; "but I transferred to the Zeppelin service as soon as I could after the battle of Horn Reef because I felt certain—from the depression of the men, which seemed to get worse rather than better as time went on—that there would never be another naval battle. Although we lost few ships (less than you did by a considerable margin, I think I am correct in saying), yet the terrible battering we received from only a part of the English fleet, and especially the way in which we were utterly smothered during the short period your main battle fleet was in action, convinced the men that they were very lucky to have got away at all, and seemed to make them determined never to take chances against such odds again. I knew that if we ever got them into action again, it would

have to be by tricking them—making them think they were going out for something else—and that is why I felt sure the day of our surface navy was over, and why I went into the Zeppelin service to get beyond contact with the terrible dry-rot that began eating at the hearts of the High Sea Fleet from the day they came home from the battle of Horn Reef. What has happened since then has proved my fears were well founded, for the men, becoming more and more suspicious every time preparations were made to go to sea, finally refused to go out at all. And that was the end."

Commander C—— (to give his equivalent British rank) volunteered a good deal more about Jutland on this occasion, as well as of the strategy in connection with those final plans which went awry through the failure of men, but it will be best, perhaps, to let this appear in its proper sequence in a connected account of what he told, in the course of the several days we were thrown together, of the German naval problems generally, and his own experiences and observations at Horn Reef in particular.

"We were greatly disappointed when England came into the war," he said, "but hardly dismayed. We had built all our ships on the theory that it was the English fleet they were to fight against, and we felt confident that we had plans

that had a good chance of ultimately proving successful. But those plans did not contemplate—either at the outset, or at any subsequent stage of the war down to the very end—a gunnery battle to a finish. The best proof of that fact is the way the guns were mounted in our capital ships, with four aft and only two forward. That meant that their *rôle* was to inflict what damage they could in swift attacks, and that they were expected to do their heaviest fighting while being chased back to harbour. Since the British fleet had something like a three-to-two advantage over us in modern capital ships, and about two-to-one in weight of broadside, I think you will agree that this was not only the best plan for us to follow, but practically the only one.

"I think it will hardly surprise you when I say that, up to the outbreak of the war, we knew a great deal more about your navy than you did about ours. To offset that—and of much greater importance—is the fact that your knowledge of our navy and its plans during the war was far better than ours of yours. You always seem to score in the end. But at the outset, as I have said, we were the better informed, and, among other things, we knew that we had better mines than you had, and (as I think was fully demonstrated during the first two years) we had a far

better conception in advance of the possibilities of using them—both offensively and defensively —than you had. During the first two years and a half your mines turned out to be even worse than we had expected, and it is an actual fact that some of the more reckless of our U-boat commanders used to fish them up and tow them back to base to make punchbowls of. In the last twenty months you not only had two or three types of mine (one of them American, I think) that were better than anything we ever had, but you were also using them on a scale, and with an effectiveness, we had never dreamed of.

"We also thought we had a better torpedo than you had—that it would run farther, straighter, keep depth better, and do more damage when it struck. I still think we have something of the best of it on that score, though at no time was our superiority so great as we reckoned. Your torpedoes ran better than they detonated, and—especially in the first two years—a very large number of fair hits on all classes of our lighter craft were spoiled by 'duds.' This, I am sorry to say, was not reported nearly so frequently during the last year and a half.

"But it was on the torpedo that we counted to wear down the British margin of strength in capital ships to a point where the High Sea Fleet

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

"HERCULES," WITH THREE V-CLASS DESTROYERS IN KIEL HARBOR

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

would have a fair chance of success in opposing it. We expected that our submarines would take a large and steady toll of any warships you endeavoured to blockade us with, and that they would even make the risk of patrol greater than you would think it worth while to take. Although we made an encouraging beginning by sinking three cruisers, we were doomed to heavy disappointment over the U-boat as a destroyer of warships. We failed to reckon on the almost complete immunity the speed of destroyers, light cruisers, battle-cruisers, and even battleships would give them from submarine attack, and we never dreamed how terrible an enemy of the U-boat the destroyer—especially after the invention of the depth-charge—would develop into. As for the use of the submarine against merchant shipping, to our eternal regret we never saw what it could do until after we had tried it. If any German had had the imagination to have realized this in advance, so that we could have had a fleet of a hundred and fifty U-boats ready to launch on an unrestricted campaign against merchant shipping the day war was declared, I think you will not deny that England would have had to surrender within two months.

"We also made the torpedo a relatively more important feature of the armament of all of our

ships—from destroyers to battleships—than you did. They were to be our "last ditch" defence in the event of our being drawn into a general fleet action—just such an action, in fact, as the battle of Horn Reef was. We knew all about your gunnery up to the outbreak of the war, and the fact that the big-gun target practices were only at moderate ranges—mostly under 16,000 metres—told us that you were not expecting to engage us at greater ranges. But all the time we were meeting with good success in shooting at ranges up to, and even a good deal over, 20,000 metres, and so we felt sure of having all the best of a fight at such ranges. We knew that our 11-inch guns would greatly out-range your 12-inch (perhaps you already know that even the 8.2-inch guns of the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* out-ranged the 12-inch guns of the *Invincible* and *Indefatigable* at the Falkland battle), and we hoped they might even have the best of your 13.5's. We also knew that our ships were better built than yours to withstand the plunging fall of long-distance shots, and we felt sure that our explosive was more powerful than your lyddite. I am not sure that this proved to be the case, though there is no question that our hits generally did more harm than yours because more of them penetrated decks and armour.

"Feeling confident, then, of having the best of a long-range action, our plan was, as I have said, to use the torpedo as a 'last ditch' defence in case the English fleet tried to reduce the range to one at which it could be sure of securing a higher percentage of hits and thus making the greater weight of its broadside decisively felt. In such a contingency we planned to literally fill the sea with torpedoes, on the theory that enough of them must find their targets to damage the enemy fleet sufficiently to force it to open out the range again, and perhaps to cripple it to an extent that would open the way for us to win a decisive victory. Theoretically, this plan was quite sound, for it was based on the generally recognized fact that from three to five torpedoes—the number varying according to the range and the interval between the targets—launched one after the other at a line of ships *cannot* fail to hit at least one of them, providing, of course, that they all run properly.

"Well, almost the identical conditions under which we had planned and practised to run our torpedo barrage were reproduced at Horn Reef when the British battle fleet came into action near the end of the day, but it failed because the English Admiral anticipated it—probably because he knew in advance, as you always seemed to know everything we were doing or intended to do, what

to expect—by turning away while still at the extreme limit of effective torpedo range. Most of our spare torpedoes went for almost nothing, so far as damage to the enemy was concerned, in that 'barrage,' and it would have gone hard with us had there been enough daylight remaining for the English fleet to have continued the action. Its superior speed would have allowed it to make the range whatever its commander desired, and—even before half of the battleships of it were firing—we were absolutely crushed by sheer weight of metal, and it would not have been long before every one of our ships would have been incapable of replying. You will see, then, that, in the sense that it postponed the brunt of the attack of the English battle fleet attack until it was too late for it to be effective, our torpedo barrage undoubtedly saved the High Sea Fleet from complete destruction.

"Our lavish expenditure of torpedoes at that juncture, though, compelled us to forgo the great opportunity which was now presented to us to do your fleet heavy damage in a night action. Darkness, as you know, goes far to equalize the difference in numbers of opposing fleets, and makes an action very largely a series of disjointed duels between ship and ship. In these duels the odds are all in favour of the ship with the best system of recognition, the most powerful searchlights, and

the most effective searchlight control. We believed that we had much the best of you in all of these particulars, and (although it was our plan to avoid contact as far as possible on account of our shortage of torpedoes) such encounters as could not be avoided proved this to be true beyond any doubt. You seemed to have no star shells at all (so far as any of our ships reported), and our searchlights were not only more powerful than yours, but seemed also to be controlled in a way to bring them on to the target quicker. It may be that the fact that our special night-glasses were better than anything of the kind you had contributed to this result. In any case, in almost every clash in the darkness it was the German's guns which opened fire first. Practically every one of our surviving ships reported this to have been the case, but with those that were lost, of course, it is likely the English opened up first. Another way in which we scored decisively in this phase of the action was through solving the reply to your night recognition signal, or at least a part of it. One of our cruisers managed to bluff one of your destroyers into revealing this, and then passed it on to as many of our own ships as she could get in touch with. We only had the first two or three letters of the reply to your challenge, but the showing of even these is known to have

been enough to make more than one of your destroyer commanders hesitate a few seconds in launching a torpedo, only to realize his mistake after he had been swept with a broadside from the secondary armament of a cruiser or battleship which left him in a sinking condition. It was an English destroyer that hesitated at torpedoing the *Deutschland* until I almost blew it out of the water with my guns, that afterwards launched a torpedo, even while it was just about to go down, that finished the *Pommern,* the flagship of my squadron."

Commander C——'s account of his personal observations at Jutland threw light on a number of points that the Allied public—and even those to whom the best information on the subject was available—were never able to make up their mind upon.

"The English people," he said, "to judge from what I read in your papers, always deceived themselves about two things in connection with the battle you call Jutland. One of them was that the High Sea Fleet came out with the purpose of offering battle to the English fleet, or at least endeavouring to cut off and destroy its battle-cruiser squadron. This is not the case. Quite to the contrary, indeed; it was the English fleet that went out to catch us. We had been planning for some

time a cruiser raid on the shipping between England and Norway—which was not so well protected then, or even for a year and a half more, as it was the last year—and the High Sea Fleet and Von Hipper's battle-cruisers were out to back up the raiding craft. As usual, your Intelligence Bureau learned of this plan, and the English fleet came out to spoil it. It was Von Hipper, not Beatty, who was surprised when the battle-cruisers sighted each other. Beatty's surprise came a few minutes later, when two of his ships were blown up almost before they had fired a shot. That seemed to vindicate, right then and there, our belief in our superior gunnery and the inferior construction of the English ships. Unfortunately, there was nothing quite so striking occurred after that to support that vindication. The other English battle-cruiser, and the several armoured cruisers, sunk were destroyed as a consequence of exposing themselves to overwhelming fire. It was the chance of finishing off all the English battle-cruisers before the battle fleet came to their rescue that tempted Von Scheer to follow Beatty north, and as a consequence he was all but drawn into the general action that it was his desire to avoid above anything else.

"The other thing that the English naval critics (although I think your Intelligence Bureau must

have had the real facts before very long) deceived themselves and the public about was in the matter of Zeppelin reconnaissance during, and previous to, the Horn Reef battle. They have continued to state from that day right down to the end of the war that it was the German airships which warned Von Scheer of the approach of Jellicoe, and so enabled the High Sea Fleet to escape. Perhaps the most conclusive evidence that we *did not* have airship reconnaissance was the fact that Von Scheer was not only drawn into action with Jellicoe, but that he even got into a position where he could not prevent the English ships from passing to the east of him—that is, between him and his bases. I will hardly need to tell you that neither of these things would have happened if we had had airships to keep us advised of the whereabouts of your battle fleet. It was our intention to have had Zeppelin scouts preceding us into the North Sea on this occasion—as we always have done when practicable—but the weather conditions were not favourable. We *did* have Zeppelins out on the following day, and these, I have read, were sighted by the English. But if any were reported on the day of the battle, I can only say it was a mistake. It is very easy to mistake a small round cloud, moving with the wind, for a foreshortened Zeppelin, especially if you are ex-

pecting an airship to appear in that quarter of the sky."

Of the opening phases of the Jutland battle Commander C—— did not see a great deal personally. "We were steaming at a moderate speed," he said, "when Von Hipper's signal was received stating he was engaging enemy battle-cruisers and leading them south—that is, in the direction from which we were approaching. As there were a number of pre-dreadnoughts in the fleet, its speed—as long as it kept together—was limited to the speed of these. In knots we were doing perhaps sixteen when the first signal was received, and even after forming battle line this speed was not materially increased for some time. I understood the reason for this when I heard that the engine-room had been ordered to make no more smoke than was positively necessary. We had given much attention to regulating draught, and on this occasion it was only a few minutes before there was hardly more than a light grey cloud issuing from every funnel the whole length of the line. The idea, of course, was to prevent the English ships from finding out any sooner than could be helped that they were being led into an 'ambush.' As long as we did not increase speed it was easy to keep down the smoke, and I am sure that the

first evidence the enemy had of the presence of the High Sea Fleet was when they saw our masts and funnels. But we saw them before that—we saw the two great towers of smoke that went high up into the sky when two of them blew up, and we saw the smoke from their funnels half an hour before their topmasts came above the horizon. At this time, although all of the ships of the High Sea Fleet were coal burners, they were making less smoke than the four oil-burning ships of the *Queen Elizabeth* class, which we sighted not long after the English battle-cruisers. As soon as we began to increase speed, of course, we made more smoke than they did.

"The four remaining English battle-cruisers turned north as soon as they sighted us, and I do not think the fire of the High Sea Fleet did them much harm. They drew away from us very rapidly, of course, so that our 'ambush' plan did not come to anything after all. A squadron of English light cruisers, which were leading the battle-cruisers when we first sighted them, almost fell into the trap, though, or, at any rate, their very brave (or very foolish) action in standing on until they were but little over 10,000 metres from the head of our line gave us the best kind of a chance to sink the lot of them. That we did not

do this was partly due to the fact that most of the ships of our line were still endeavouring to reach the English battle-cruisers with long-range fire, and partly (I must admit it, though my own guns were among those that failed to find their mark) to poor shooting. These light cruisers did not turn until we opened fire at something over 10,000 metres; but although all our squadron concentrated upon them during the hour and more before the great speed they put on took them out of range, none of them were sunk, and I am not even sure that any was badly hit.

"When the four ships of the *Queen Elizabeth* class came into action there was a while when they were receiving the concentrated fire of practically the whole High Sea Fleet, and possibly some of that of our battle-cruisers as well. Yet it did not appear that—beyond putting one of them (which we later learned was the *Warspite*) out of control for a while—we did them much damage. The weight of our fire seemed to affect theirs a good deal, though, and at this stage of the fight they did not score many hits upon those of our ships—it was upon the squadron of *Königs* that they seemed trying to concentrate—that they gave their attention to. Later, when the effort to destroy several of the newly arrived squadron of

English battle-cruisers and armoured cruisers drew a part of our fire, their heavy shells did much damage.

"The High Sea Fleet's line became considerably broken and extended in the course of the pursuit of the English battle-cruisers and the *Queen Elizabeths,* the swifter *Königs* steaming out well in advance in an effort to destroy some of the English ships before their battle fleet came into action, and my own squadron dropping a good way astern. That was the reason that my ship neither gave nor received much punishment in the daylight action. It was our battle-cruisers and the more modern battleships of the High Sea Fleet—principally the latter—which, tricked by the bad visibility, suddenly found themselves well inside the range of the deployed battleships of the main English fleet. I can only say that I am thankful that I did not have to experience at first hand the example they received of what it meant to face the full fire of that fleet. The English shooting, which opened a little wild on account of the mists, soon steadied down, and I have heard officers of four or five of our ships say that it was becoming impossible to make reply with their guns when darkness broke off the action. I have already told you how our torpedo 'barrage'—in forcing the English fleet to sheer off

until it was too late for decisive action—saved a large part, if not all, of our fleet from destruction. What would have happened in the event that the attack had been pressed, no one can say. It would all have depended upon the extent of the damage inflicted by our torpedoes. I can only say that—as it was a contingency we had prepared for by long practice—Jellicoe would only have been playing into our hands in taking his whole fleet inside effective torpedo range, and I have confidence enough in the plan to wish that he had tried it. It would have meant a shorter war whatever happened, and, what is more, anything would have been better for us than what did come to pass—two years of gradual paralysis of the German navy, with a disgraceful surrender at the end.

"As I have said, we were anxious to avoid a night action on account of our shortage of torpedoes, however much such an action would have been to our advantage had not our supply of these been so nearly exhausted. So we were a good deal relieved when it became apparent that the enemy were not making any special effort to get in touch with us again after darkness fell. As a consequence of this disinclination of both sides to seek an engagement, such clashes as did occur were the sequel to chance encounters in the dark, and in most cases they seem to have been broken

off by the common desire of both parties. Some of your destroyers persisted in their attacks whenever they got in touch with one of our ships, but we usually made them pay a very heavy price for the damage inflicted.

"Von Scheer took the High Sea Fleet back to harbour by passing astern of the English battle fleet, which had continued on to the south. I think I am correct in saying that none of the capital ships of either fleet were in action with those of the other after dark. There were two or three brushes between cruisers and a good many between destroyers and various classes of heavier ships. In fact, our principal difficulties arose through running into several flotillas of destroyers which seemed to have straggled from the squadrons to which they had been attached. My squadron, with a division of cruisers, ran right through a flotilla of about a dozen large English destroyers, and it would be hard to say which had the worst of it. We lost the *Pommern* (it would have been my ship, the *Deutschland,* had not the line been reversed a few minutes previously) and a cruiser, and had two other cruisers badly damaged, one from being rammed by a little fighting-cock of a destroyer which must have committed suicide in doing it. We sank two or three of the destroyers by gun-fire, and left two or three

more stopped and looking about to blow up. Two of them were seen to be in collision, and there was also a report that they were firing at each other in the mêlée, but that was not corroborated. This fight only lasted a few minutes, and we saw no more English ships of any kind on our way back to harbour.

"In the matter of the losses at Horn Reef, we have never had any doubt that those of the English were much heavier than ours, even on your own admissions. And since we inflicted those losses with a fleet of not much over half the size of yours, we have always felt justified in claiming the battle to have been a German victory. The *Lützow* was our only really serious loss, though the other battle-cruisers—especially the *Derfflinger* and *Seydlitz*—were of little use for many months, so badly had they been battered by gun-fire. The battleship and cruisers sunk were out of date, and we lost only one modern light cruiser. We may have lost as many destroyers as you did, though yours would have footed up to a greater tonnage, as they average larger than ours. We made a great mistake in concealing the loss of the *Lützow* for several days, for, after that, the people never stopped thinking that there were other and greater losses not announced.

"But although the English losses must have

been much greater than ours, I am not sure that they were enough greater to offset the loss of *morale* in the men of the German fleet. As I have said, I do not think—unless we had tricked them into it, as we tried so hard to do at the end—that we could ever again have got them to take their ships out in the full knowledge that they were in for a fight to a finish with the English battle fleet. It would have been better that they had all been lost fighting at Horn Reef than that they should have survived to bring upon themselves and their officers a disgrace the like of which has never been known in naval history."

# XI

## BACK TO BASE

THE German Naval Armistice Commission, perhaps as a reaction from its belligerent attitude at the first conference at Kiel, manifested an increasing amenability to reason with every day that passed, as a consequence of which the work of the Allied Commission was pushed to a rapid completion. The search of the warships was completed in a couple of days, and the decision to limit the inspection of air stations to those west of Rügen reduced the visits of this character to three, all easily reached by destroyers. Of the town of Kiel, nothing was seen at close quarters, visits in that vicinity being limited to the dockyard, ships in the harbour, and the seaplane station of Holtenau, near the entrance to the canal.

Although the Allied ships under embargo hardly arrived at Kiel for inspection at the rate promised, there was little to indicate that the Germans were endeavouring to evade their promise of doing everything possible to facilitate the return of these to the Tyne at the earliest possible moment. The *City of Leeds,* a powerfully engined little packet

which had been on the Hamburg-Harwich run before the war, furnished the only glaring instance of deliberate bad faith. The German Shipping Commission, declaring that her crew had ruined her engines and boilers by pouring tar into them when she was seized, claimed that she had been quite useless since that time, and disclaimed any responsibility for reconditioning her. On inspection by the Allied Shipping Commission, the statement that the engines had been damaged by anything but use and neglect was proved to be absolutely false. Why the Germans should have told so futile a lie was not fully explained, though as a possible reason it was suggested that some private party, desiring to keep the ship in his hands, had made a false report of her condition to the Shipping Commission.

The arrival and departure of Allied prisoners of war was one of the most interesting features of the week in Kiel. The most of these were British—picked up by one or another of the destroyers at this or that port touched at—but there was one large party of French, from a camp near Kiel, and several Belgians, Serbs, and Italians from heaven knows where. These were all made as comfortable as possible in the *Hercules,* and dispatched to England in the next mail destroyer. Except for a man now and then who was suffering

from a neglected wound, they were in fairly good condition, a fact, however, which did not lessen their almost rapturous enjoyment of the heaping pannikins of "good greasy grub" (as one of them put it) that was theirs for the asking at any hour of the day they cared to slip up to the galley. Their delight in the band, in the ship's kinema, in "doubling round" for exercise in the morning, in anything and everything in the life in this their halfway station on the road home was a joy to watch.

Some of the British prisoners came from the same towns or counties as did men of the ship's company, and the exchange of reminiscences often went on far into the night. Passing across the flat between the ward-room and the commission-room late one evening, I heard a Lancastrian voice from a roll of blankets on the deck protesting to a bluejacket in the hammock above that "Jinny X——" of Wigan didn't have yellow hair when he (the owner of the voice) used to know her, and that, in fact, he'd always thought her rather a "shy 'un."

"Thot was afore she worked in a 'T.N.T.' fact'ry," replied the "hammock," with an intonation suggesting that he felt that was sufficient explanation of both changes.

A good deal of rivalry developed between the

four escorting destroyers in the matter of picking up prisoners, and to hear their officers discussing their "bags" or "hauls" when they foregathered at night in the ward-room of the *Hercules* reminded one of campers drifting in at the end of the day and yarning of the ducks they had shot and the fish they had caught. "If we could have waited another half-hour twenty more were coming with us," claims *Venetia.* "But even with those," replies *Vidette,* "you would not have been anywhere near our sixty-nine." It was this latter "bag," indeed, which proved the record one of the "season," both in numbers and "quality," for it consisted entirely of non-commissioned officers from a camp near Hamburg.

The same cringing attempts at ingratiation and conciliation which had been so much in evidence in the attitude of the civil population toward parties from the Commission when they met in streets or stations seem also to have been consistently practised in the case of prisoners about to be repatriated. Although the German takes naturally and easily to this kind of thing, just as he did to his *schrecklichkeit* and general brutalities, there was much in the way he went about making himself pleasant to returning prisoners that bore the marks of official inspiration. Several men who came to the *Hercules* brought copies of circular

H. M. S. "HERCULES" AND H. M. S "CONSTANCE" IN KIEL LOCKS

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

letters in English which, after pointing out that they had invariably been treated with the greatest courtesy and consideration possible under the very trying circumstances Germany found herself in on account of the blockade, hoped that they would bear no ill will away with them, and that the years to come might bring them back to Germany under happier circumstances. The screeds really had much the tone of an apologetic country host's farewell to guests whom he has had to keep on short commons on account of being snowed in or a breakdown on the line.

One of the best of them was addressed to "English Gentlemen," and went on as follows:—

"You are about to leave the newest, and what we intend to make the freest, republic in the world. We very much regret that you saw so little of what aroused our pride in the former Germany—her arts, sciences, model cites, theatres, schools, industries, and social institutions, as well as the beauties of our scenery and the real soul of our people, akin in so many things to your own.

"But these things will remain a part of the new Germany. Once the barriers of artificial hatred and misunderstanding have fallen, we hope that you will learn to know, in happier times, these grander features of the land whose unwilling guests you have been. A barbed wire enclosure

is not the proper place from which to survey or judge a great nation. There will be no barbed wire enclosure in the Germany to which you will return a few months hence. In the meantime we feel that we can count upon you, forgetting the unpleasanter features of your enforced sojourn with us, to exert your influence to reunite the bonds of friendship and commerce which were bringing our countries ever closer and closer together before their unfortunate severance by the sword of war, and upon the knitting up again of which the future of both so greatly depends.

"Three cheers for peace and good will to all mankind!"

Rather a delicate little touch, that "bonds of commerce" one!

Unfortunately, the language in which most of the prisoners described the state of mind which this kind of thing left them in is not quite suited for publication. It was one of the mildest of them—a London cockney who seemed never quite to have got back all the blood he lost when his thigh was ripped open with shrapnel at the assault on Thiepval—who said that "Jerry" never would get over being surprised when "a bloke called 'im a b——y blighter arter 'e'd tried to shove a *ersatz* fag on you an' 'oped you w'udn't be bearin' 'im any 'ard feelin's in the years to come."

The attitude that German girls and women appear to have adopted toward Allied, and especially British, prisoners from the time the armistice went into force is not a pleasant thing to write of, and I confine myself to a single observation which an old sergeant of the "Contemptibles"—one of the sixty-nine that the *Vidette* brought from Hamburg—made on the subject. It was one of the most witheringly biting characterizations of a nation I have ever heard fall from the lips of any man. He had been telling me in a humorous sort of way of "raspberry leaf tea," *ersatz* coffee of various kinds, paper sheets, and various and sundry other substitutes, and then, switched off to the subject by a question regarding a statement a German officer had been heard to make about the relations of prisoners and women of the country, he spoke of the ways of the girls of Hamburg since the armistice.

"There is no doubt," he said, "that the young of both sexes have been getting more and more shameless in their morals ever since the beginning of the war, but it is only since we were practically set free by the armistice that the state of things has come home to prisoners. I don't think that there are very many British prisoners—certainly no man that I know personally—who have had anything to do with these young hussies; but that

is not the fault of the girls, for they have pestered us only less in our camp than upon the street. It's principally because we have a bit of money now, and sometimes a bit of food that isn't *ersatz*. I don't think I'm exaggerating very much, sir, when I say that fifty per cent. of the girls of the lower classes in Hamburg would sell themselves for a cake of toilet soap or a sixpenny packet of biscuits. *Ersatz* food and *ersatz* women! By God, sir, Germany's a country of substitutes and prostitutes, and it's glad I am to be seeing the last of it!"

I have yet to hear the Germany of today summed up more scathingly than that.

Speaking of the moral degeneracy of Germany, a poster found by a member of the Commission in a train by which he was travelling sheds an interesting light on the subject. It was addressed to the "Youth of Wilhelmshaven and Rüstringen" by the Council of Workmen and Soldiers, and the following is a rough translation.

"The German youth has been a witness of the great liberating act of the German Revolution. It has witnessed how the fetters of the old *régime* were burst and Freedom made her entry into the stronghold of reaction, the Prussian military state. And it is the youth of today which will reap the fruits of this great change. It will one

day find as an accomplished fact all that for which the best of the people have sacrificed themselves.

"Therefore the most serious duties are laid upon the youth of today, to which it is becoming increasingly necessary to draw their attention. Complaints are unfortunately increasing of late that the youth is lapsing more and more into moral anarchy, which carries with it the most serious dangers for the future. Revolution does not mean disorder, but a new order. Remember that the whole future of Germany depends upon you; you are the trustees of the future. Be conscious of the great responsibility which rests today upon your young shoulders. . . . You must now learn to be equal to the task which awaits you. Obey your teachers and leaders. That is the first demand made upon all today.

"We expect, therefore, that you take this warning to heart, and that we may not be forced to take stronger measures against those among you who either cannot or will not submit!"

* * * * *

There was a suggestion of power and strength in the name itself, and in setting out to inspect the Great Belt Forts there were few in the party who had not visions of uncovering the secrets of something very much in the nature of a Baltic Gibraltar or Heligoland. "Number One" or the "Inter-

national" sub-commission turned out in full strength in anticipation of what had generally been regarded as the crowning, as it was the concluding, event of the visit. The very protestations of the Germans only whetted their interest the keener, for it was a precisely similar line to one they had taken in the matter of the visit to Tondern, where there *had* been something worth seeing. "Look out for surprises in connection with the 'Great Belt' inspection," was the word, and every one in any way entitled to attach himself to what was to be the last party landed before the return of the Commission to England made arrangements to do so.

Brave with swords, bright with brass hats, aglitter with aiguillettes was the imposing line of French, British, Italian, American and Japanese officers who filed across from the *Hercules* to the *Verdun* an hour before dawn on the morning of December 16. An hour after darkness descended, wet with rain, bespattered with mud, ashiver with cold, those same officers straggled back to the *Hercules* again. This is the order in which one of them summed up the day's observation: "The most notable event of the inspection," he said as he warmed his chilled frame before the ward-room fire, "was the sight of the first pig we have clapped eyes on in Germany; the next so was meeting a

Hun with enough of a sense of humour to take us three miles round by a muddy road and over ploughed fields and deep ditches to a point he could have reached by a mile of comparatively dry railway track; and the third was a drive through ten miles of Schleswig countryside that was beautiful beyond words, even in the pelting rain. The Great Belt Forts? Oh, yes, we saw them. They were five holes in the ground on top of one hill, four holes in the ground on the top of another fifteen miles away, and a dozen or so ancient guns dumped into the hold of a tug. But—let's talk about the pig."

There is not much that I can add to ths succinct summary of the inspection of the forts of the "Baltic Gibraltar." What the sub-commission saw—or rather failed to see—there went a long way toward confirming the impression (which had been growing stronger ever since the arrival of the *Hercules* at Wilhelmshaven) that Germany had depended upon mines rather than guns for the defence of her coasts. The porker mentioned was the one I alluded to in an earlier chapter as just failing to win the officer sighting it the pool which was to go to the first man who saw a pig in Germany, because an Irish-American member of the party had testified that it had "died from hog cholera an hour before it had been killed." The

lovely stretch of farming country driven through showed many signs of its Danish character, and at several windows I even saw the red-and-white flag of the mother country discreetly displayed. This region, of course, falls well north of the line that is expected to form the new Danish boundary.

* * * * *

At the final conference with the German Naval Armistice Commission, which was held in the *Hercules* on the morning of the 17th, Admiral Goette and his associates, in striking contrast to their belligerent attitude at the first meeting in Kiel, proved thoroughly docile and conciliatory. All of the important points at issue were conceded —including the surrender of submarines building and the delivery of the *Baden* in place of *Mackensen*—and tentative arrangements were made for future visits of special Allied Commissions whenever these should be deemed necessary to insure the enforcement of the provisions of the armistice. Work on the reconditioning of all Allied merchant ships was to be given precedence over everything else. Considering that he had no trumps either in his hands or up his sleeve, Admiral Goette played his end of the game with considerable skill. Such futile attempts at "bluffing" as he made were invariably traceable to pressure exerted upon him from the "outside," probably Berlin. Per-

sonally, in spite of the severe nervous strain he was under (the effects of which were increasingly noticeable at every succeeding conference), he deported himself with a dignity compatible with his heavy responsibilities. The same may be said of Captain Von Müller, which is perhaps as far down the list as it would be charitable to go in this connection.

* * * * *

Weighing anchor at noon of the 18th, the *Hercules* was locked through into the canal in good time to see in daylight that section which had been passed in darkness in coming through from the North Sea. A rain, which turned into soft snow as the afternoon lengthened, was responsible for rather less frequent and numerous crowds of spectators than on the previous passage. The ubiquitous Russian prisoner was still much in evidence. An especially pathetic figure was that of a lone *poilu*—still in horizon blue, with the skirts of his bedraggled overcoat buttoned back in characteristic fashion—whom I sighted just before dark. Leaning dejectedly on his hoe in a beet-field, he watched the *Hercules* pass without so much as lifting a finger. Most likely the unlucky chap took her for a German, for the rapturous demonstrations with which a score of his comrades signalized their arrival aboard a few days before

showed very clearly how a French prisoner would greet a British ship if he knew her nationality.

The *Hercules* went into her lock at Brunsbüttel an hour before midnight. The *Regensburg*, which had preceded her through the canal, was already in the adjoining lock, and in attempting to pass on the light cruiser *Constance* and three British destroyers at the same operation the canal people made rather a mess of things. There was a savage crashing and tearing of metal at one stage, followed by a considerable flow of profanity in two languages. When, the next morning in the Bight, a signal of condolence was made by the *Hercules* to one of the destroyers following in her wake on the "messy" state of its nose, the reply came back. "Don't worry about my nose. You ought to see the *Regensburg*. I've got a piece of her side-plating on my forecastle!" That was the second time the unlucky *Regensburg* had come to grief in locking through at Brunsbüttel with the ships of the Allied Naval Commission.

Owing to the fog, the Germans were unable, or unwilling, to send a ship to take off their pilots from the *Hercules* and escorting destroyers after the outer limits of the mine-fields had been passed, and it became necessary as a consequence to carry them on to Rosyth. The change of air and food incidental to their personally conducted tour to

Scapa (to await the next German transport home) was evidently a by no means disagreeable prospect to them, judging by the way they took the news. The steward who reported that the pilot he was looking after had been "stowing away grub like he expected a long continuance of the blockade," may have stumbled upon the reason for their philosophic attitude.

We found the Firth of Forth as we left it—wrapped in fog. There was just enough visibility to make it possible to find the gates in the booms and the main channel under the bridge. The historic voyage came to an end when the *Hercules*, after tying up to the *Queen Elizabeth's* buoy for a few hours, went into the dry dock at two-thirty in the afternoon of the 20th. The Commission left for London the same evening in a special train provided by the Admiralty.

THE END

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
BERKELEY

THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE
STAMPED BELOW

Books not returned on time are subject to a fine of 50¢ per volume after the third day overdue, increasing to $1.00 per volume after the sixth day. Books not in demand may be renewed if application is made before expiration of loan period.

JAN 31 19[illegible]

FEB 16 1920

JAN 31 1924

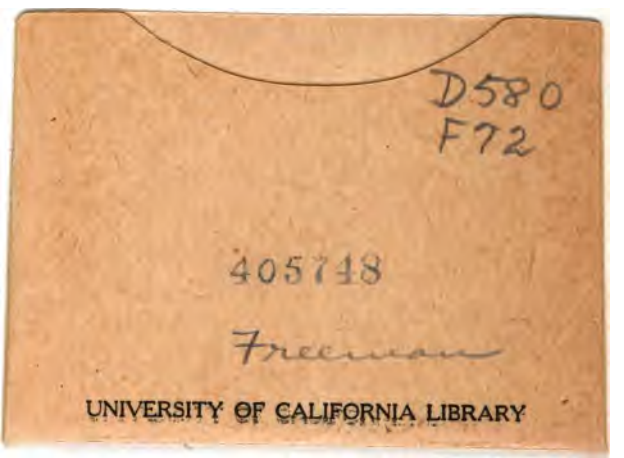
AUG 18 1924

JAN 20 1931

24Mar'59MR

LD

MAR 10 1959

50m-7,'16

YC 29074